



WFP Chad
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200377.

Country:	Chad
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Chad
Total cost (US\$):	US\$17,616,692
Duration:	Twelve months (01 st January 2012 to 31 st December 2012)

Executive Summary

This Special Operation (SO) is established to continue the provision of safe and reliable air transport services to the humanitarian community in Chad in 2012.

From 1 January 2010 until 31 December 2011 the project has been implemented through the Special Operation (SO) 200058. This new SO, 200377, is an expansion of the project 200058, which includes the project activities and follows the same objectives in 2012.

The areas where populations in need of humanitarian assistance are living are far away from the United Nations agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations' (NGOs) field offices. Given the poor road conditions and the prevailing insecurity, travel by road is extremely risky and not-practical. Besides the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which provide passenger air service for its own staff, WFP Humanitarian Air Service (WFP/UNHAS) remains the safe and reliable mode of transport for the humanitarian community in Chad.

Special Operation 200377 will be organized and managed through the WFP Chad Country Office. This WFP/UNHAS operations will seek to provide a safe, reliable and cost efficient air transport service to the humanitarian community providing assistance to refugees, host populations and Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) throughout the country in 2012. This service has been requested by over 100 humanitarian agencies and the donor community currently operating in Chad. In 2012 WFP/UNHAS is planning to maintain same fleet size as in 2011 - 5 fixed wing aircraft to service at least 18 destinations on regular basis.

The Special Operation is required for the duration of twelve months, from 1st January to 31st December 2012, at a total cost of US\$17,616,692. The services are free of charge and the budget costs are to be raised through donor contributions.

Project Background

1. The United Nations World Food Programme established humanitarian air service WFP/UNHAS in Chad in February 2004 to facilitate air transport of the humanitarian

personnel and light cargo for agencies assisting Sudanese Refugees, host populations and internally-displaced persons (IDPs) in the north-east of the country.

2. Since then WFP/UNHAS has been recognized by the entire humanitarian community in Chad as the safest and most reliable common air service, satisfying the occupational needs of the United Nations agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other humanitarian actors in the country. While the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) air service is authorized for the United Nations staff air travel, the service is mainly for ICRC staff. WFP/UNHAS, on the other hand, serves the entire humanitarian community in country.
3. From 1 January 2010 until 31 December 2011 the project has been implemented through the Special Operation (SO) 200058. This new SO (200377) is an expansion of 200058, which includes the same project activities and follows the same objectives in 2012.
4. There are still about 300,000 refugees in Chad reliant on Humanitarian aid- 240,000 Sudanese along the Chadian/ Darfur border and about 60,000 from Central African Republic(CAR) along the Chadian /CAR border. There are also about 131,000 IDPs in Eastern Chad receiving humanitarian assistance. Approximately 1.6 million people are affected by malnutrition mainly in the Sahel from where most of the returnees from Libya originate. The returnees came back poor and thus have worsened the situation in the region.¹
5. Travel between the capital and the refugee camps remains highly hazardous and time-consuming, primarily due to the prevailing security situation and the lack of basic road infrastructure. The north and the eastern part of the country are classified as United Nations security level 3; road travel is authorized only with military/police escorts. Therefore, air travel has proven to be the only safe and reliable mode of transport to reach the refugees and IDPs during most of the year. Beside security concerns, the 5-month rainy season also makes road transport extremely challenging. Most road travel is restricted during the rainy season in order to prevent further road damage caused by vehicle/truck traffic. All these result in sustained demand from the humanitarian community for WFP/UNHAS as the only means to reach the beneficiaries in many remote locations in Chad.
6. In 2011, WFP/UNHAS operated 5 aircraft (1 x 50-seat Dash 8 aircraft; 1 x 8-seat PAC750XL ; 2 x 19-seat LET 410 aircraft and 1 x 19-seat Beechcraft 1900D aircraft). During the rainy season 1 x MI 8 Helicopter managed by WFP/UNHAS under a technical service agreement for UNHCR has been utilized. With operational bases in N'Djamena, Abeche and Gozbeida, WFP/UNHAS uses a hub and spokes route structure in/out of Abeche and introducing some direct flights to Gozbeida from N'Djamena. Regular/scheduled flights are provided to 20 destinations within Chad. Special or unscheduled flights have been provided, as required, on a full cost recovery basis.

¹ OCHA Chad Monthly Humanitarian Bulletin – September 2011

7. From January to September 2011 the service has transported 49,095 passengers and 141 mt of light humanitarian cargo, as well as evacuated 72 people (70 for medical evacuation and 2 for security evacuation).

MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	TOTAL
HOURS FLOWN	358.52	325.93	407.4	451.63	450.74	518.62	477.28	512.09	471.84	3974.05
PAX MOVED	5026	4760	5733	5787	5731	6387	5693	4702	5276	49095
CARGO	12.19	15.93	12.53	14.1	20.3	18.46	16.71	14.03	16.46	140.71
EVACUATIONS	14	5	4	6	3	5	11	10	14	72

Project Justification

8. In 2011, Chad has witnessed several significant changes in the humanitarian context which will have an impact on the humanitarian response for the coming year. Malnutrition and food insecurity in the west and Sahel region, the continuing but slow return of IDPs in the east, the continued presence of refugees in the east and the south, present important challenges to humanitarian actors for 2012. The ability of the humanitarian community to continue responding to these needs depends on undisrupted access to populations in need.
9. There are no adequate medical facilities in eastern Chad. In case of serious injury/illness, aid workers requiring medical care, must be evacuated to N'Djamena and frequently to Europe for treatment. The number of evacuations carried out in 2011 is twice that of 2010 (for the same period until 30 September 2010 recorded 36 whilst 2011 has recorded 72 evacuations).
10. In addition to the increased needs of the humanitarian community in 2011, the initial reasons for the WFP/UNHAS presence remain, as following:
- Distances between the main areas of humanitarian activities and their bases are vast with roads in poor conditions and insecurity rendering road travels very risky. During the dry season, it takes up to 3 days to travel the 900 km that separate N'Djamena and Abéché, the hub of humanitarian activities in eastern Chad. During the rainy season, (June to mid-October), the road is officially closed to regular traffic by the Chadian authorities and travellers may require up to 10 days travelling along the northern desert route. The distance then increases to 1,400 km and guides are required to navigate through the desert. The average distance between Abéché and the refugee camps is 250 km. Bahai, the furthest camp in the northern sector, is located 371 km from Abéché while the furthest one in the southern sector, Goz-Amir, is 265 km from Abéché. A road trip from Abéché to Bahai in the northern zone can take between 12 hours during the dry season and 2-3 days during the rainy season, depending on the situation at the many *wadis* that must be crossed. Travellers must sometimes camp by the *wadis* while waiting for the water to recede and river beds to dry up. The two camps in the south-eastern zone (Haraze and Daha) are inaccessible by road during the 5 rainy months of the year.
 - There is little or no accommodation along these roads. Banditry on the roads has been a big problem in eastern Chad.

- Given the extremely difficult environment in eastern Chad, air travel is the only way to transport humanitarian workers quickly and safely from N'Djamena and Abeche to various locations.
 - There are no safe commercial operators present in the country which are authorized for the UN travel.
11. In the light of the above, the WFP/UNHAS Users Group, composed of representatives of United Nations agencies, NGOs and donors, during its latest meeting, which took place in N'Djamena on 20 September 2011, recognized that the role of WFP/UNHAS will remain crucial for the implementation of many humanitarian activities in Chad in 2012. It was established during the meeting that humanitarian activities will increase so there was no reason to reduce the fleet size for this vital air service.

Project Objectives

12. The objectives of the SO are:
- To provide safe, efficient and cost-effective inter-agency air transport service for over 100 United Nations Agencies, NGOs and donor organizations providing humanitarian assistance to Sudanese refugees, host populations and IDPs in the region;
 - To transport light cargo such as medical supplies, high energy foods and information and communications technology (ICT) equipment; and
 - To provide timely medical and security evacuations for the humanitarian community in Chad.

Project Implementation

13. On behalf of all users, WFP will manage the WFP/UNHAS in Chad. The humanitarian agencies would benefit from WFP's expertise and experience in managing air operations. This air service is expected to support more than 100 agencies by providing regular access to at least 18 locations.
14. 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 WFP/UNHAS User Group Committee (UGC) composed of United Nations agencies, NGOs and donor representatives in N'Djamena. 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 regular basis.
15. The operational fleet will consist of 5 aircraft (1 x 50 -seat Dash 8 ; 2x -19 seat LET 410 ; 1x19 seats B1900 and 1x 10 seat Caravan type aircraft) based strategically in N'Djamena, Abeche and in Gozbeida to respond effectively to regular demand and emergencies/evacuations.
16. The project will implement standard WFP management structures and support systems:

- Passenger and cargo booking will be made through WFP/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/HF radios and the Satellite tracking system in the interest of flight safety.
 - The Web Based Electronic 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.
17. The Aviation section (ODLA) based in Rome is responsible for the contracting of the aircrafts and the safety oversight of the operation.
 18. ODLA's Quality Assurance assessments will be conducted and their reports will be used as a tool for evaluation and improvement of operational efficiency.
 19. 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.
 20. 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.
 21. The WFP Chad 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 Chad.
 22. WFP/UNHAS will continue providing regular flights free of charge, and full cost recovery method will be applied to dedicated agency charter flights.

Project Cost & Benefits

23. The total project cost for this Special Operation is **US\$17,616,692** as detailed in the budget.
24. The envisaged benefits of the WFP/UNHAS in Chad are as follows:
 - enhanced operations, 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 United Nations entity should benefit from another's presence through establishing corresponding consultative and collaborative arrangements";

- enhanced air safety through a standardized, single contracting and safety surveillance system;
- a cost-effective service that can take advantage of economies of scale through lower aircraft direct operating cost, payload consolidation and an integrated organization; and
- an essential tool used to provide medical and security evacuation service to the humanitarian aid community in the country.

Monitoring & Evaluation

25. 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 of 75 percent ;
- Number of passengers transported against planned (target: 5000 passengers per month);
- Tonnage of food or non-food items transported against requested or planned quantities (target: 15 mt of non-food items per month);
- 100 percent utilization of contracted hours;
- Frequency of and attendance to the UGC meetings (target:monthly); Minutes meeting should be available;
- The number of United Nations agencies and other humanitarian organizations utilizing the service and number of locations served. Currently more than 100 agencies benefit from this service with access to 18 locations; and
- 100 percent response to medical and security evacuations duly requested.

The implementation plan will be revised, as the situation evolves, according to the needs of the humanitarian community.

Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning

26. 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.

27. **Contextual Risks.** Security in Chad can deteriorate, which may result in limitation of humanitarian travel. WFP/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 risk.

28. **Programmatic Risks.** Humanitarian agencies may scale up their assistance in the 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 current fleet. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and cargo transport, if required.

29. 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 its UGC's advocacy efforts will continue in order to ensure uninterrupted services for the humanitarian community.

Exit Strategy

30. Given the complex situation in Chad and the neighboring countries, WFP cannot envisage at this point the development of an exit strategy. 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 to 31st December 2012 at a total cost to WFP of **US\$17,616,692** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Josette Sheeran
Executive Director