



**WFP Republic of South Sudan  
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200423**

Country:	Republic of South Sudan
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Food Security Cluster Augmentation in Response to the Continued Humanitarian Situation in South Sudan
Total cost:	<b>US\$1,191,658</b>
Duration:	November 2012 to April 2013 (6 months)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This special operation for the Food Security and Livelihood Cluster (FSLC), which has been active in southern Sudan since 2004, will expand and strengthen its service delivery to: (i) include four regional sub-national coordination locations; (ii) establish an open information management platform to promote more efficient coordination of humanitarian response activities, including the management of any gaps or overlaps (the platform will be housed on a dedicated web site for easy access to all partners/members); and (iii) expand and strengthen the current food security monitoring system (FSMS) to better track performance and enhance the accuracy and consistency of information on who is doing what, where and when.

## **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

1. The newly independent Republic of South Sudan (South Sudan) has a population of 9.6 million people and is comprised of ten states spread across 650,000 km<sup>2</sup>. It is one of the least developed countries in the world.
2. Humanitarian assistance requirements increased during the independence referendum and following the declaration of the new state of South Sudan on 9 July 2011. By November 2011, more than 841,000 returnees had arrived in the country from the Republic of Sudan (the Sudan). The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports 666,000 refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPSs) reside in South Sudan.<sup>1</sup> Fighting in Abyei region, South Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile has displaced even more people to Unity State and Maban in Upper Nile. Returnees require significant support from humanitarian partners to be fully integrated. The majority of returnees have concentrated their temporary settlements in the fragile border-states of Unity, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Upper Nile and Warrap.
3. The FSLC has a membership 58 partners and is co-led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WFP, supported by a secretariat consisting of: FAO and WFP co-coordinators; an elected non-governmental organization (NGO) co-coordinator; an information management officer; and a

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR. 2012. <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4e43cb466.html>

monitoring and reporting officer supported by the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) managed by the Office of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). At the sub-national level, 10 clusters were rolled-out in 2011 and are co-managed by state cluster focal points from FAO and WFP, but are in need of formal support to become fully established.

4. The FSLC has four sub-clusters (established in 2012) to enhance participation of partners in specific thematic discussions on strategy, standards, best practices and response priorities. Sub-cluster meetings are chaired by WFP (Food Assistance), FAO (Agriculture), Mercy Corps (Urban Livelihoods) and Vétérinaires sans frontières (Veterinarians without borders)-Belgium (Livestock/Fisheries).
5. The FSLC already has a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, data-collection tools and a database system. The cluster has established links with the Nutrition cluster and is exploring further links with the health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) clusters.
6. The FSLC has no dedicated funding and relies on *ad-hoc* joint funding from FAO, WFP and support from the global Food Security Cluster (gFSC) for short-term support. WFP and FAO are accountable to ensure the cluster is established and operational to cover the coordination and information management gap in South Sudan.
7. Due to its experience in a complex emergency, the FSLC offers crucial linkages between emergency, recovery and development. The cluster works with partners and the Government to update and disseminate data on livelihood zones and profiles, as well as to better understand how markets function, acting as a catalyst for post-conflict recovery and development activities.

## **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

8. There are 342 non-governmental organizations (155 international and 187 national) as well as 21 United Nations agencies and international organizations providing assistance across the ten states of South Sudan. Of these, almost 100 work in food security. To ensure that all food-insecure areas are appropriately covered, a common approach to assessments and strategy formulation would promote more coordinated and informed responses.
9. Political uncertainty between South Sudan and the Sudan highlights the need for a strengthened FSLC that can accurately and rapidly report on needs in remote areas where assistance is being delivered. A deeper field presence would: (i) support monitoring and reporting systems that can adjust quickly to the fluid situation in border areas, and (ii) engage with the state governments as they establish policies and procedures that define how they will work together in the future.
10. The delivery of humanitarian services in South Sudan poses significant challenges to all of the FSLC members - both in terms of coordination and information management - due to the vast distances and poorly developed infrastructure, both communication and physical. Furthermore, increasing tensions and insecurity along

the border between South Sudan and the Sudan restrict the movement of relief items through corridors normally used by the humanitarian community.

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

11. The main objectives of this special operation (SO) to augment the FSLC are to:
- Ensure that the coordination of the food security sector is strengthened to enable humanitarian actors to more efficiently respond, country-wide, to the increasing needs of the affected population.
  - Ensure that response decisions are informed by accurate and timely information that is accessible on a common platform.

## **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

12. This SO proposes to:
- Establish a comprehensive food security sector coordination system with sub-national offices in four border-states. Regular coordination meetings at the national and sub-national level with humanitarian partners and government counterparts will identify and streamline gaps and overlaps in the delivery of services.
  - Work with FSLC members to update livelihood baselines and profiles and strengthen a common understanding of market functions. To the extent possible, this information will be compiled from existing sources, including the FSMS. There will be field data collection involving partners.
  - Design, develop and implement a structured monitoring and reporting system for all operational members to ensure consistent and accurate food security and vulnerability analysis, activity progress and outcome reporting. The monitoring system will complement WFP's FSMS. Output information will be collected regularly and will track information on planned versus actual operations. Data collection will focus on disaggregated beneficiary information, types of services and activities provided and inputs delivered (cash, commodities etc.).
  - Develop an information management platform with a dedicated website. The cluster is currently co-hosted on the gFSC website and additional work will improve the existing system.
  - Develop formalised inter-cluster strategic linkages with the clusters for nutrition, health and WASH to foster a programme-based approach, create opportunities for a more holistic approach and greater impact, and promote faster graduation rates.
13. WFP and FAO, as cluster co-lead agencies of the FSLC, will build upon the present coordination structure and jointly take responsibility for raising funds to support activities.
14. At the national level, the FSLC will maintain a dedicated coordinator and an information management officer, with appropriate administrative and operational support. National staff will be deployed in the four sub-national border state offices. Consultants and staff will represent both FAO and WFP, as well as FSLC members. WFP will contract all staff under this project.

## **EXIT STRATEGY**

15. An Inter-Agency Standing Committee system for cluster de-activation and handover will guide the transition process. The FSLC, supported by the gFSC, has already provided coordination training to government officials at the sub-national level. Capacity-development support will continue to ensure that the Government can assume a greater role in coordination. The FSLC will also work with national staff to ensure a sustainable coordination model is constructed that will meet the evolving needs of the sector. The sub-national cluster coordinators will provide on-the-job training to the FAO/WFP state-focal points and their government counterparts involved in coordination at the sub-national level. A transition of coordination activities will be integrated into longer-term recovery and development sectors of the Government.
16. The proposed SO has a limited duration and is the first step to secure dedicated and predictable funding to strengthen sub-national coordination and information management of the FSLC. Coordination and information management requirements will likely continue beyond the SO's duration. Alternative future funding options are being examined, including the inclusion of these requirements within other projects and/or through pooled funding mechanisms, until full handover to government authorities is possible. Joint fundraising efforts by FAO and WFP will continue to be required with the support of the humanitarian coordinator.
17. To foster sustainability, partners will be engaged in data collection that provides added value in the form of timely reporting, advocacy for under-covered areas and under-funded activities, and enhanced coordination.

## **PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

18. The WFP Country Director of South Sudan will manage the fund for this SO and the WFP South Sudan finance officer will be the allotment manager. The FSLC co-coordinators at national level will be responsible for the implementation of the activities.

## **PROJECT COST AND BENEFITS**

19. The estimated project cost is US\$1.19 million and includes: staffing; the information management platform including maintenance and equipment (such as personal digital assistants); rent; office supplies; and costs for transportation leasing and maintenance. Subject to funding availability, coordination and information management activities will be prioritized.
20. Key benefits include:
  - A coordinated food security response that is fully inclusive of NGO and government partners, and includes an inter-cluster collaboration model.
  - An open information management system to ensure availability of all reports and studies on a common platform.
  - The development of a common monitoring system that will ensure consistent and accurate information and reporting.

- Updated livelihood baselines and profiles that will strengthen early warning and outcome monitoring.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

21. The following key performance indicators have been identified:

### *Coordination:*

- At least two meetings per month in Juba and in each state.
- One inter-cluster collaborative structure that provides a more holistic service delivery to beneficiaries.

### *Information management:*

- The development and implementation of an information management platform.
- The development and implementation of a website.

### *Monitoring and reporting:*

- An expanded FSMS developed and implemented across the sector.

### *Response coordination:*

- Identification and planned responses to gaps and overlaps in the national response plan.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION**

22. The political and security environment of the newly independent state creates numerous contextual, programmatic and institutional risks:

23. *Contextual risks:* The principal risk is to the security of humanitarian agencies. This risk will be mitigated through:

- Creating a FSLC secretariat that draws from international staff, national staff and local NGO volunteers for regional coordination positions in areas where United Nations access is limited for regional food security coordination.
- Liaising with government authorities and the United Nations Department of Safety and Security to monitor the security situation.
- Requesting the Humanitarian Coordinator to intervene or resolve issues with the appropriate authorities on behalf of FSLC.

24. *Programmatic risks:* (i) Increasing insecurity in South Sudan, especially in the border states could further restrict access; (ii) inadequate funding of co-lead agencies' and partners' response plans; (iii) lack of coordination and information-sharing between humanitarian actors. These risks will be mitigated through:

- Regular cluster meetings, nationally and in border states, to ensure the FSLC is capturing and reporting on all food security-related activities and comparing data against the estimated needs quoted in assessments.
- Regular donor briefings with the Juba-based donor community, highlighting the current level of coordination with FSLC members and resource constraints and other access-related challenges.
- Engagement of local and regional NGOs to reinforce the inclusive nature of the FSLC.

25. *Institutional risks:* (i) Reputational risk to FSLC co-lead agencies and partners if coordination responsibilities are not managed properly; (ii) politicisation of United Nations humanitarian efforts affecting the engagement of non-governmental and international organisations in cluster coordination. These risks will be mitigated through:

- Participating and engaging in broader coordination fora to raise awareness of the value-added services provided by the FSLC to humanitarian agencies responding to food insecurity in South Sudan.
- Increased response capacity to respond to United Nations demands of co-lead agencies including: (i) consolidated appeals process; (ii) mid-year reviews; (iii) CHF management; (iv) programme reporting requirements; and (v) participation in all coordination fora.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed special operation, covering the period from November 2012 to April 2013 at a total cost to WFP of US\$1.19 million, is recommended for approval by the Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, under the Executive Director's delegated authority.

## **APPROVAL**

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Amir Abdulla

Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer

## **ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT**

CHF	common humanitarian fund
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
gFSC	global Food Security Cluster
FSLC	Food Security and Livelihood Cluster
FSMS	food security monitoring system
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SO	special operation
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme