



WFP MAURITANIA

SPECIAL OPERATION (SO 200424)

Country:	Mauritania
Type of project:	Special Operation (SO)
Title:	WFP Logistics Augmentation in support of the humanitarian response in Mauritania as a result of the drought and refugee crisis within country
Total cost (US\$):	US\$ 5,009,671
Duration:	Six months (1 June to 30 November 2012)

SUMMARY

The Sahel region of West Africa was severely affected by a drought during the 2011 growing season. As a result of this drought, Mauritania has seen a reduction in its agricultural production, as well as a decrease in available grazing land for domestic livestock. Therefore, in order to provide enough food for its population, the Government has been forced to rely on the importation of staple food products. Coupled with this, there has been a rise in fuel prices. These issues combined are threatening the food security of already vulnerable segments of the population. In addition, there has been an influx of refugees from Mali into the south-eastern part of Mauritania straining further limited resources.

In response, WFP and the wider humanitarian community have scaled up operations. The multiple challenges, however, due to the size of the country and the resulting long distances that must be travelled to reach areas of intervention, in addition to limited transport and storage capacity, have adversely affected the humanitarian response.

In order to facilitate access to vulnerable populations, this Special Operation provides for an increase in logistics capabilities in support of WFP EMOP 200333 and Regional WFP EMOP 200438 for refugees (under approval). Its secondary aim is to respond to requests for support by the Government and, finally, to assist the wider humanitarian community with logistics coordination and information management.

This Special Operation will cover a period from **1 June to 30 November 2012** at a total cost estimated at **US\$ 5,009,671**.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

1. While WFP has a Regional SO 200402 responding to the Sahel drought crisis, specific circumstances in Mauritania (as mentioned below) warranted this SO.
2. The emergency plan “EMEL” (which means “Hope”) set up by the Government to address the food crisis caused by the regional drought provides for the import, transport and storage of a total

of 479,826 mt of varying food commodities (167,333 mt of which is for human consumption and 312,493 mt for livestock). Given the scale of this plan it is anticipated that the logistics infrastructure within the country will be stressed, thus creating logistical bottlenecks at entry port, and hindering handling, transport and storage capacity.

3. At the same time, there has been an influx of approximately 95,000 Malian refugees into the south-eastern part of Mauritania, requiring assistance from the humanitarian community.
4. As a result, the logistics infrastructure within the country is being stretched and the commercial market can no longer meet the competing demands of the Government and the humanitarian community.
5. Until recently, WFP shared storage facilities with the Government. Given the needs, however, of the Government for storage space for their food response, WFP has been requested to find alternative storage facilities.
6. The scale of the adverse humanitarian situation has resulted in the humanitarian community activating the Logistics Cluster.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

7. The objectives of this Special Operation are as follows:
 - a. augmentation of WFP's logistics capacity in support of EMOP 200333 & EMOP 200438 in terms of transport and storage;
 - b. efficient delivery of food and non-food items in a cost effective manner;
 - c. where possible, support the Government's response by providing transport and additional storage capacities;
 - d. facilitate coordination and optimization of logistics capabilities through the Logistics Cluster.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

8. In order to ensure adequate transport capacity is available at all times, provision has been made in this SO for a fleet of trucks. Arrangements will be made to lease/sub-contract a fleet of approximately 20 commercial trucks whose primary purpose will be to support WFP food deliveries and, if necessary, to meet requests by the Government, other UN agencies and NGOs. Due to the high demand for commercial trucking by the Government and local businesses, the contracting/leasing of commercial trucks will guarantee that sufficient transport capacity is available to respond to the humanitarian community's needs, both in terms of the drought and the refugee situation. At the same time, provision is made within this SO to provide running and maintenance cost for a fleet of 15 trucks owned and operated by WFP.
9. Given the requirement from the Government for storage space as part of their response plan, WFP cannot rely on Government warehouses for the storage of commodities. Therefore, through this SO WFP will augment its storage capacity in order to ensure enough space is available for its own needs, and the estimated needs of the wider humanitarian community. This will be done through two separate activities: (1) 20 mobile storage tents (Wiikhalls) will be purchased and installed in Nouakchott and other identified logistics hubs to be used to respond to the crisis; (2) WFP will rent warehouses (hard structures) and, when needed, undertake renovations on these structures as

part of this Special Operation. The additional storage facilities will also be used to pre-position food and NFIs for WFP and the wider humanitarian community prior to distribution including prepositioning in areas which will be inaccessible during the rainy season.

10. A small component of this SO covers the costs of road rehabilitation such as the road between Nema and Bassikounou that is in dire need of being repaired and is the only route available in the area where approximately 95,000 refugees from Mali have settled. The SO does not plan to rehabilitate the entire 200 km of road, but instead to provide spot repairs in the most critical areas along this stretch of road. This road, which is already in bad condition, will only get worse during the rainy season. Responsibility for the rehabilitation of the critical final 18 km of road from Bassikounou to M'berra camp is currently under negotiation with UNHCR.
11. Given that the Logistics Cluster has been activated, a component of the SO will provide for the creation of a team of logistics experts to provide coordination and information management on behalf of the Logistics Cluster participants.
12. To respond to the emergency situation in eastern Mauritania, WFP has set-up and staffed two logistics hubs in Nema and Bassikounou. Telephone communications between these bases and the CO in Nouakchott are in place, however the service providers are unable to provide internet connectivity through mobile and landlines. Thus, internet will be provided through VSAT connectivity which WFP will make available to other UN agencies and NGOs operating in the region if required. In addition, the telecommunication system installed in track vehicles will assist to secure movement of vehicles and enhance WFP's ability to respond effectively to the challenges.

COST/BENEFIT OF THE PROJECT

The total cost of this project is **US\$ 5,009,671**(see budget attached) and the expected benefits include:

- a. ensuring a continuous and timely delivery of food and NFIs;
- b. ensuring that WFP accomplishes its mandate during this emergency by providing logistics support to the host government which does not have all the necessary logistics capabilities to deal with the situation on its own;
- c. facilitating the receipt and storage of food and NFIs for WFP and other humanitarian actors; and
- d. enhancing its communications.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

13. A mission will take place during the implementation phase of the operation to ensure the correct policies and procedures are in place. The project will be managed as follows:
 - a. The WFP Head of Logistics will be the project manager and oversee the implementation of this Special Operation. He/she will be assisted by the Regional Office and Headquarters, if necessary;
 - b. The Representative and Director of the WFP Country Office in Mauritania will be the finance manager. The CO finance officer will be the administrator and will be in charge of managing the budget of the operation.

14. Key Performance Indicators for this special operation will be:

- a. increased logistical capacities in transport and warehousing;
- b. number of planned delivery points reached;
- c. tonnage of food/NFIs delivered monthly compared to the planned tonnages;
- d. the number of kilometres of road rehabilitated;
- e. establishment of a telecommunications network to comply with MOSS requirements;
- f. standard, reliable and secure telecommunications system to track vehicles movements;
- g. back-up telecom equipment and power sources installed in all emergency sites and operational platforms.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION

15. A number of factors could impact the implementation of this SO. The main risks identified are defined and broken down below into contextual, programmatic and institutional risks. Possible mitigation measures are also included below.

1. Contextual risks:

- a. access restrictions to certain areas due to heightening insecurity;
- b. closure of corridors due to insecurity and/or political developments;
- c. closure of corridors due to climatic conditions (rainy season);
- d. temporary fuel shortages and/or large increase in fuel costs;
- e. congestion at the port that in turn will delay delivery of cargo;
- f. labour strikes in the port and/or transport sectors; and
- g. difficulty in recruiting sufficient competent staff to fill the newly created positions to meet the CO's objectives.

The above risks will be mitigated through:

- a. if absolutely necessary, the use of escorts;
- b. timely dispatch of cargo;
- c. pre-positioning commodities in pre-selected EDPs;
- d. maintaining emergency stocks of POL (petrol, oil and lubricants) in all sub-offices;
- e. request that priority be given to humanitarian cargo in close cooperation with C&F Agents, port authorities, military and police;
- f. establishing a direct link to government institutions to allow humanitarian assistance to reach the beneficiaries; and
- g. using external national staff on TDY or mission status.

2. Programmatic risks:

- a. funding might not be available to meet all requirements of the SO;
- b. these risks will be mitigated by prioritizing the objectives and reducing the scope of project.

3. Institutional risks:

- a. decrease in government support;
- b. components of the SO no longer required.

These risks will be mitigated by:

- a. maintaining components of the SO for which government support is still available;
- b. reallocating resources within the SO.

EXIT STRATEGY

16. The project is scheduled to last six months. In the event that requirements for which the SO was created go beyond the initial projected period, the resources procured during the SO will be maintained. However, if the requirements of the project go beyond the initial projected period, a budget revision will be required to cover the staffing and other recurring costs.

The requirements of the project will cease when:

- a. the Government declares the end of the drought; and
- b. the refugees have been repatriated.

On completion of the project, most of the material procured during the SO will be retained by the CO in order to build its capacity to respond to future emergencies in Mauritania.

RECOMMENDATION

17. This Special Operation covering the period **1 June to 30 November 2012** at a total cost estimated at **US\$ 5,009,671** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director (see attached budget).

APPROVAL

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Ramiro Lopes da Silva
Deputy Executive Director
for Operations