



WFP Sudan
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200514

Country:	Sudan
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Sudan
Total cost (US\$):	US\$33,484,728
Duration:	Twelve months (01 st January 2013 to 31 st December 2013)

Executive Summary

Special Operation (SO) 200514 has been prepared to ensure the continued provision of safe, reliable and cost efficient air transport services to the humanitarian community in Sudan in 2013. From 1 January 2012 until 31 December 2012 the project was implemented through the Special Operation (SO) 200354.

The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) will be organized and managed by WFP to facilitate the movement of aid workers providing humanitarian assistance to Sudanese refugees, host populations and Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) throughout the country. This service has been requested by more than 150 humanitarian agencies and the donor community operating in Sudan.

Through this project, WFP will operate 7 aircraft (one Dash 8-300, one EMB-135, one PAC-750, and four MI-8 helicopters) based in Khartoum, Nyala, El Fasher and El Geneina to regularly reach over 60 destinations in Sudan.

The Special Operation is required for the duration of twelve months, from 1st January to 31st December 2013, at a total cost of **US\$33,484,728**. The project is predominantly reliant on donor contributions. Passengers are charged a nominal booking fee which is set by the User Group Committee, the income from which is expected to generate approximately 25% of the project funding requirements.

Project Background

1. Since the independence of South Sudan in July 2011, Sudan has faced a number of humanitarian challenges due to ongoing conflict and insecurity in the western region of Darfur, and an escalation of conflict in the Abyei area and the states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile. The United Nations and Partners' Work Plan provides an opportunity for a wide range of humanitarian stakeholders to pursue their common interest in addressing humanitarian challenges through the delivery of life-saving assistance and ensuring that vulnerable people have access to protection and basic services.

2. Sudan continues to be a complex humanitarian emergency, characterised by localised conflicts, protracted displacement and a deteriorating economic climate. Unresolved issues in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) have exacerbated economic instability and border conflicts while leading to internal and external displacement which have negatively affected the livelihoods of millions of people. The loss of 75 per cent of oil revenues following the separation of the Republic of South Sudan has affected the Government's ability to continue previous levels of expenditure on essential basic services. This was further compounded by the poor 2011-12 agricultural season across most of the country.
3. In 2013, humanitarian programmes are targeting over 3.6 million people in the affected regions of Sudan - a reduction from 2012 - reflecting IDP verification findings and recent food security assessments. These figures will be updated in early 2013 using the findings from the Comprehensive Food Security Assessments (C-FSA) in Darfur, Kassala, North Kordofan and Red Sea states, Food Security Monitoring System (FSMS) and latest camp verification results. When possible, emergency assessments in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Abyei will provide updated information on food security among conflict-affected populations. This assistance is directed to food security, access to basic services, shelter, and livelihoods opportunities. The humanitarian situation remains acute in Darfur, where up to 1.3 million people remain in camps for internally displaced persons. Whilst at the same time a growing number of returnees require assistance. The outbreak of fighting and displacement in the three Protocol Areas at the height of the agricultural season has placed local recovery and development activities on hold and created significant new needs. Vulnerability among people of South Sudanese origins returning to South Sudan, Sudanese people returning to Sudan from South Sudan, and refugee populations in eastern Sudan, are further reminders of the humanitarian challenges in the country. Within this context, the needs of affected people are evolving. Increasingly, people are seeking assistance that provides opportunities to move beyond emergency relief assistance and rebuild productive lives¹.
4. The combination of conflict, large-scale population movements and poverty make Sudan one of the most complex political and economic environments in which the humanitarian community operates.
5. With limited infrastructure, insecurity and vast distances, surface transport remains extremely dangerous limiting access to beneficiaries. As a result, air transport is the only secure transport option for the humanitarian community.
6. To date there are no international or domestic air carriers operating within Sudan in compliance with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards, and United Nations Aviation Standard (UNAVSTAD) both of which regulate the safety of international civil aviation.

¹ From Humanitarian Work Plan for 2012, published by OCHA

7. 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.
8. UNHAS has been managed by WFP on behalf of the humanitarian community as a whole. The interests of the humanitarian community are represented by a User Group Committee (UGC). The Terms of Reference for the UGC are limited to administrative matters and include decisions on the destinations to be served and weekly flight schedule, ensuring compliance with established procedures for the safe and efficient handling of passengers and cargo and matters relating to the quality of service. Due the complexity of the mission, the Steering Committee (SC) was established in addition to the UGC, to endorse overall strategy, rules and budget scheme of WFP/UNHAS. The SC is responsible for establishing administrative policies and issuing administrative directives detailing eligibility and priority of passenger and cargo on the WFP/UNHAS aircraft, ensuring compliance with WFP management and operational policies and procedures, forecasting future usage and requirements and timely settlement of dues to WFP.
9. 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.
10. Sudan 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, 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).
11. After the kidnappings in Darfur of two helicopter crews in October, 2010 and in January, 2011, WFP/UNHAS recruited a dedicated Aviation Security officer to address airfields security challenges and to ensure safe air operations.
12. Almost two hundred users organizations comprised of UN agencies, NGOs and diplomatic missions rely on WFP/UNHAS to implement and monitor humanitarian activities in Sudan. Between January and October 2012 WFP/UNHAS Sudan transported 35,258 passengers and 202 mt of cargo, while also carrying out 13 medical evacuations and 46 security evacuations.

Project Justification

13. To date, the security situation in Sudan remains volatile and continues to impede humanitarian operations, particularly in Darfur, Abyei, South Kordofan and Blue Nile. 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. Compounding this is

the fact that this domestic commercial service is unreliable, while compliance with maintenance and safety regulations cannot be guaranteed.

14. Continuation of timely and effective humanitarian response continues to be one of the Humanitarian Country Team's (HCT) strategic priorities in 2013.
15. Insecurity, poor infrastructure, long distances² and the lack of safe and reliable air transport providers make the continued presence of WFP/UNHAS in the country essential to the Humanitarian Community at large.
16. Given the context of a large-scale complex emergency, harsh environment and limited access in Sudan, WFP/UNHAS remains flexible and regularly reviews its fleet size and configuration against the prevailing humanitarian requirements in order to satisfy the air transport demand.
17. In the light of the above, the WFP/UNHAS Steering Committee (SC), composed of representatives of United Nations agencies, NGOs and donors, during its latest meetings in Khartoum recognized the crucial role of WFP/UNHAS in Sudan and the need for its continuation in 2013.

Project Objectives

18. The objectives of this SO are:
 - To provide safe, efficient and cost-effective inter-agency air transport service for over 150 United Nations Agencies, NGOs and donor organizations providing humanitarian assistance to Sudanese refugees, host populations and IDPs;
 - 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 Sudan.

Project Implementation

19. On behalf of all users, WFP will manage the WFP/UNHAS operations in Sudan. Humanitarian agencies will benefit from WFP's expertise and experience in managing air operations. This air service is expected to support more than 150 agencies by providing regular access to at least 60 locations.
20. In accordance with WFP's Air Transport Directive of January 2004 and in compliance with ICAO recommendations, WFP has set up UNHAS User Group Committees (UGC) composed of UN agencies, NGOs and donor representatives in Nyala (South Dafur), Fasher (North Dafur) and Genina (West Dafur). Their role 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). User Group meetings are

² A comparative example captures difficulties that are encountered in travel across Sudan: A trip from the capital Khartoum to West Darfur is 2.30 hours by air or at least 2 weeks by road.

conducted monthly with the Steering Committee meetings held quarterly or when necessary.

21. The operational fleet will consist of 7 aircraft (one Dash 8-300, one PAC-750, one EMB-135 and four MI-8 helicopters) based in Khartoum, Nyala, Fasher and Genina providing access to at least 60 locations. The plan is for the Dash-8-300 and EMB-135 aircraft to provide air shuttle services from Khartoum to the three Darfur state capitals; the light fixed-wing aircraft will provide passenger air transport from the hubs to remote locations with short airstrips; while the dedicated fleet of helicopters will provide the humanitarian community access to areas in Darfur that cannot be reached by road, either due to insecurity or poor road conditions, as well as to areas with limited landing facilities for fixed-wing aircraft.
22. 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.
 - In the interest of flight safety a dedicated communication system will be put in place to monitor flight progress of all WFP operated aircrafts through VHF/HF radios and satellite tracking systems.
 - The Web Based Electronic Flight Management Application (EFMA) system has been fully implemented. The system enables on-line booking requests and monitoring of usage of the air service by various agencies, load factors, flight routing and provides operational and cost data for management oversight.
 - Weekly/ monthly flight schedules are maintained, with flexibility to adjust to requests for special flights.
23. The Aviation section (ODLA) based in Rome is responsible for the contracting of aircrafts and the safety oversight of the operation.
24. ODLA's Quality Assurance assessments will be conducted and their reports will be used as a tool for evaluation and improvement of operational efficiency. The last assessment took place in May, 2012.
25. 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.
26. The CATO will manage the operation locally under the overall supervision of the WFP Country Director and through the Chief of Aviation. The CATO will provide operational reports to the CD, the Chief of Aviation, and SC/UGC.
27. The WFP Sudan Country Director will act as the Funds Manager and the WFP/UNHAS Finance Officer will be the Allotment Administrator for this operation.

28. ODLA will provide operational and administrative support and will be responsible for the oversight of the operational activities in Sudan.

29. In addition to the resources expected to be raised through donor contributions, WFP/UNHAS will continue charging a nominal booking fee on regular routes, and full cost recovery will be applied to dedicated charter flights as directed by the Steering Committee.

Project Cost & Benefits

30. The total project cost for this Special Operation is **US\$33,484,728** as detailed in the budget.

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN		
SO Category	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Sudan	Value (USD)
Project Number	200514	
Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC):		
A - Recurring Costs(Incl. Rental of facilities, Utilities, Office supplies & other consumables, Communications & IT Services, equipment repairs & maintenance, vehicles running costs):		1,255,096
B - Operational Service(s) Costs (aircraft fixed and variable costs):		24,724,480
C - TC/IT Equipment Costs (data processing equipment):		86,000
D - Local Security Costs		546,000
D - Vehicle Leasing Costs		143,712
Total Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC):		26,755,288
Direct Support Costs (DSC - Staff Salaries and other costs):		
A - International Professional Staff + consultants		2,250,780
B - Local Staff (General Service + Temporary Assistance)		1,725,276
C - Other Staff Costs (incl.travel and allowances)		562,795
Total Direct Support Costs (DSC):		4,538,851
Total WFP Direct Costs:		31,284,139
Indirect Support Costs (ISC - 7 percent) :		2,190,590
TOTAL WFP COSTS		33,484,728

31. During the implantation of SO 200354 the WFP/UNHAS Steering Committee, in an effort to keep this vital service running, approved a nominal booking fee of US\$200 (hub to hub) and \$100 (hub to deep field) per passenger. This practice will be maintained and is expected to contribute up to 25% of the overall project cost. The remaining 75% of the budget is expected to be raised through donor contributions.

32. The envisaged benefits of the WFP/UNHAS operations in Sudan 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 integrated organization; and
- an essential tool used to provide medical and security evacuation service to the humanitarian aid community in the country.

Monitoring & Evaluation

33. Based on project historical statistics, key performance indicators will be reported at the end of the project and will include the following:
- Number of passengers transported against planned (target: 3600 - 3700 passengers per month); Tonnage of food or non-food items transported against requested or planned quantities (target: 25 mt of non-food items per month);
 - 100 percent utilization of contracted hours;
 - Frequency of and attendance to the SC/UGC meetings (target: monthly); Minutes meeting will be made available;
 - The number of United Nations agencies and other humanitarian organizations utilizing the service and number of locations served. Currently more than 150 agencies benefit from this service with regular access to at least 60 locations; and
 - 100 percent response to medical and security evacuations duly requested.

All Key Performance Indicators above are linked to WFP's Strategic Results Framework and are examples of Strategic Objective 1, Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies. .

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

Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning

34. A number of risks could impact the implementation of this 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.
35. **Contextual Risks.** Security in Sudan can deteriorate further, which may result in limitation of humanitarian travel. WFP/UNHAS will work in close coordination with UNDSS to ensure timely communication of the security situation at destinations and will plan its operations accordingly. Operational hazards identification will be implemented through established WFP Aviation structures and the relevant risk analysis and mitigation actions will be implemented as required to maintain an acceptable level of risk.
36. **Programmatic Risks.** Humanitarian agencies may scale up assistance in the country through an increase of their staff while expanding their 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.

37. **Institutional Risks.** The success of the SO is conditional on adequate resources being made 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

38. Given the complex political and security situation and lack of safe commercial air service providers in Sudan, WFP/UNHAS cannot envisage at this point the development of an exit strategy. WFP will rely on the UGC's and the Steering Committee's regular feedback and will devise an exit strategy accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 01st January to 31st December 2013 at a total cost to WFP of **US\$33,484,728** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director