WFP Mali
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200534
Logistics Cluster & Emergency Telecommunication Cluster Support to the Humanitarian Community in Mali

Country:	Mali
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Logistics Cluster and Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Support to the Humanitarian Community in Mali
Total cost (US$):	**US$ 3,405,456**
Duration:	Twelve months (1January 2013 to 31December 2013)

Executive Summary

This Special Operation (SO) is established to provide the humanitarian community in Mali with emergency telecommunications and logistics coordination mechanisms, means and common services needed to respond to the present crisis in Mali.

This SO is also designed so that both the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) and Logistics Cluster are prepared for emergencies and the potential aggravation of the political, security and economic context in Mali.

The ETC and Logistics Cluster were activated in Mali in April 2012. The humanitarian community has requested that both be extended in their current capacities and continue to fill the identified gaps and respond to the needs expressed by their partners. Under a country specific SO, the ETC and Logistics Cluster will be able to focus their work around responding to the impact of the military intervention in the North of the country and the consequences of a potential economic downfall in the South.

This SO will allow both the ETC and Logistics Cluster to provide support to UN agencies, INGOs and local NGOs that participate in humanitarian operations responding to the current crisis in Mali. Over 32 organizations will benefit from the activities hereby described.

The Special Operation is required for 12 months, from 1st January 2013 to the 31st of December 2013. At a total cost of **US$ 3,405,456**

Project Background
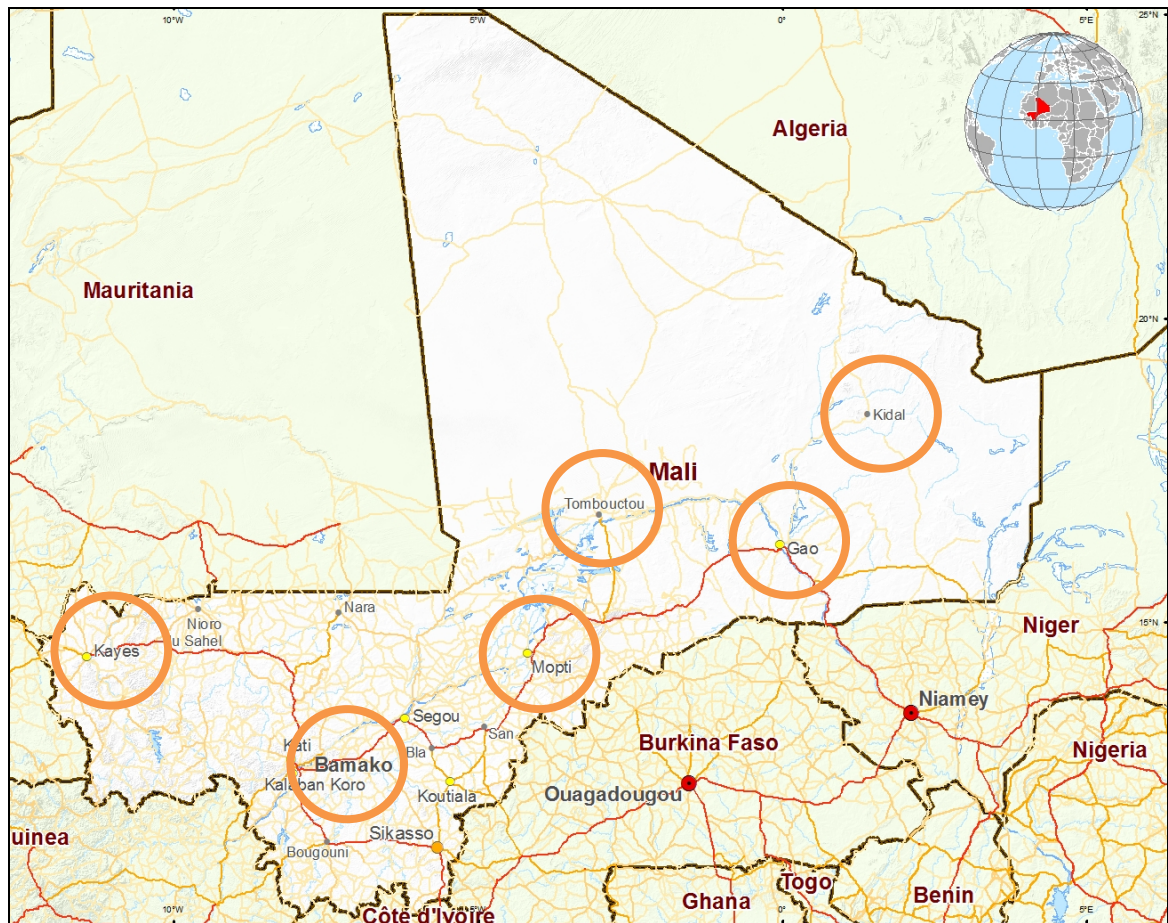
Prime areas of intervention and targets for ETC and the Logistics Cluster

1. Mali is a vast landlocked country in the heart of the Sahel region. Mali's social indicators remain among the lowest in the world and the country is ranked 175 out of 187 countries on the 2011 UNDP Human Development Index (HDI). Some 69 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line.

2. Repetitive droughts in the last 8 years have negatively impacted the living conditions for an ever increasing portion of the population. Since the political coup in Bamako on 22 March 2012, Mali has faced increased political, security, and economic challenges. The institutions and organizations involved in crisis management have now been forced to change their operations and focus on emergency needs.

3. Since early April 2012, non-state armed groups have occupied the North of the country. In this time these armed groups have been able to consolidate their positions, replace government administrations, regulated the local economy and have imposed Sharia law in some areas. Thousands of people have been forced to flee. As a result of recent events, many technical and financial partners have suspended or reduced their budgetary support to the Government. As of November 2012, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are estimated at approximately 204,000, according to IOM data and the Protection Cluster.

4. The security situation limits humanitarian access as Timbuktu, Gao and the Kidal region are at UNDSS Security Level 5 (where UN presence is not permitted), Mopti, Segou, Koulikoro, Bamako and now Kayes are at level 4, and the rest of the country is at level 3.

5. According to the November 2012 SAP Mali (Système d'Alerte Précoce – Early Warning System) indications are that the 2012/2013 agricultural season has been adequate. However the population in Mali remains vulnerable as it is still recovering from the severe 2012 drought, while those that have been affected by the crisis in the North are especially at risk. At the same time, security conditions are not yet favorable for the return of IDPs. This prolonged displacement is putting a strain on host households and host communities as most displaced Malians continue to be hosted by families.

6. The security and political situation in Mali remains volatile. On the 12 October 2012, a UN resolution was voted on by the Security Council which initiated military planning for an intervention in the North of Mali.

Project Justification

General justifications:

7. In anticipation of a potential military intervention and an economic downturn in 2013, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in Mali is currently scaling up its emergency preparedness measures. In order to ensure business continuity for the humanitarian community and for the event of potential reduced access to private sector logistics services, the ETC and Logistics Cluster are preparing for an augmentation of capacity. The ETC and Logistics Cluster have to secure the human resources, the financial and material means, as well as provide coordination for all partners, in order to efficiently support the humanitarian community *(Ref.: OCHA Humanitarian Presence Map – Annex 1).*

ETC justifications:

8. The availability of reliable and independent data and voice communications services were recognised as priority areas for a successful humanitarian response to the drought in 2012 as well as the ongoing political unrest in the country.

9. On 4 April 2012, the ETC was activated in Mali (with WFP as the lead agency) as part of the humanitarian response to the double crisis. Once activated, WFP deployed a cluster coordinator on 13 April. In close coordination with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), UNDSS and the Mali ETC working group, an assessment of the emergency telecommunications infrastructure required for the humanitarian response was conducted as a mean of identifying gaps that required urgent action.

10. The assessment results showed that the emergency telecommunications system and services for the humanitarian community in Mali were neither MOSS compliant, nor were they meeting the operational requirements for an effective response.

11. The ETC project that was formulated in 2012 initially planned to address these gaps in five operational areas, namely Bamako, Mopti, Timbuktu, Kidal and Gao in the North. However, due to lack of access and UNDSS restriction on UN presence in the non-government controlled northern areas of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal, the project was only able to address the requirements in two common operational areas – Bamako and Mopti.

12. The Communication Centers (COMCENs) in Bamako and Mopti are fully operational, providing 24/7 monitoring of UN and humanitarian personnel, and the ability for staff to communicate while on mission. Through support from the Directorate for Development and Cooperation, Luxembourg and Ericsson Response, the emergency.lu and WIDER kits were deployed in Mopti, thereby providing internet connectivity to the humanitarian community in Mopti. Radio Operators, manning the COMCENs, were trained, along with over 150 staff employed by various UN agencies and NGOs on the use of radio and related Standard Operating Procedures.

13. As the situation continues to evolve in Mali, with the likelihood of military intervention in the course of 2013, it is expected that full access to the North, with UN presence could be restored. This would result in increased humanitarian assistance being provided to the northern part of the country enabling life-saving interventions to take place. Should this happen, the availability of emergency telecommunications services will be critical for the success of any humanitarian activity in key locations such as Timbuktu, Kidal and Gao. These areas are considered top priority by the humanitarian community in Mali.

Logistics justifications:

14. Since its activation, also on 4 April 2012, the Logistics Cluster has strengthened its forum and the relationships with its members. In line with the Concepts of Operation (CONOPS), the Logistics Cluster focused on coordination and information sharing and facilitated punctual services in collaboration with the WFP Mali Logistics department. Partner's needs and private sector capacities are constantly being monitored in order to identify actual and potential gaps.

15. In the present context, partners are able to ensure support to their programs by using commercial transporters. There are actually no indications that the capacities of contractors have been currently affected, but the situation remains volatile. Both security in the North and the economic situation in the South could affect the private sector's current capacity.

16. In November 2012, The HCT formally expressed their wish to maintain the activation of the Logistics Cluster and to ensure readiness for emergencies. It was decided that the CONOPS will remain the same as in 2012.

17. Also in November 2012, the Shelter Cluster was activated. UNHCR and IOM will lead the Shelter Cluster and use the Logistics Cluster as a platform to coordinate NFI projects. UNHCR intends to use the Logistics Cluster for the storage of about 12,000 NFI kits with distributed planned in 2013.

18. Partners like UNICEF are interested in prepositioning contingency stocks for 2013. A recent evaluation in Ségou confirmed its strategic position and its good potential for establishment of a hub. Partners understand the necessity for better emergency readiness in 2013. The Logistics Cluster is expected to be able to provide support and have structures in place to meet the demands envisioned by the partners.

19. The possibility for military intervention in the North of Mali, and the potential restoration of government control there, would open up access for humanitarian actors, which in turn would increase the volume of logistics operations.

20. If needed, the Logistics Cluster needs to be able to deploy Mobile Storage Units (MSU) to support its partners in the North. The main centers of partners' activities in the North are Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal where very few adapted storage structures are available imposing "just in time" logistics for most actors. Should the situation evolve so as to allow long term storage, the Logistics Cluster should be able to cover the transition period.

21. Mali has a good network of fuel stations and suppliers have capacity to provide service even if the market is severed. Nevertheless, in April 2012 and due to ECOWAZ sanctions, partners experienced shortages in fuel supply. Very few partners had solutions; therefor the Logistics Cluster prepared a contingency plan that was shared with partners. In the worst case scenario, the Logistics Cluster should be able to offer temporary storage and distribution solutions and coordinate common fuel orders from partners to suppliers.

22. Finally the ETC and Logistics Cluster must have the coordination mechanisms necessary to respond to the forecasted augmentation of needs in 2013. The ETC and Logistics Cluster should install solid foundations for a platform that will allow the partners to respond with large scale operations.

Project Objectives

23. ETC:
- To provide a coordinated, predictable, timely and efficient ETC response in the provision of standard data and security communications services;
- To ensure comprehensive and reliable emergency telecommunications and data connectivity networks and services for the humanitarian community;
- To improve the capability of the humanitarian community to coordinate the response, and operate throughout Mali;
- To minimize individual agencies' running costs and duplication of efforts through the provision of centralised emergency telecommunications services;
- To train staff in efficient and appropriate use of "lifesaving" telecommunications tools and services; and to improve the operational security environment for staff and assets, ensuring MOSS compliance, and increased control and discipline on VHF and HF networks.

24. Logistics Cluster:

Coordination:

- To reinforce the established relations between the partners within the Logistics Cluster forum.
- To ensure efficient communication between the partners while monitoring the situation so as to identify potential needs.
- To maintain a strong coordination cell in Bamako.

Information sharing:

- To identify information gaps and use networking to provide partners with the proper understanding about procedures, rules and regulations necessary to carry out logistics operations in Mali.
- To maintain regular and individual contacts with partners and collect data for processing and dissemination.
- To survey markets, corridors and context and develop flexible contingencies and operational solutions with partners.
- To provide partners with customized mapping based on the data provided from the field using Geographic Information System (GIS) in collaboration with HQ specialists.

Technical support and training:

- To provide partners with technical support, guidelines, advices and recommendations according to the needs.

Common services:

- To address and fill the identified gaps by facilitating punctual and temporary (or specialized) services such as transport and storage (using the WFP logistic means of operations, deploying MSUs, or operating dedicated warehouses).
- To provide immediate but temporary solutions in the event of a fuel shortage affecting the partners' capacities to operate.
- The partners are presently not able to quantify their storage or transport needs for 2013. The logistics cluster estimates that it should have the capacity to store a minimum of 550mt per months in Bamako, 1100mt per month in Mopti, and some additional 2200mt in the North (managed by partners) or as transit platform on alternative corridors.
- Also the Logistics Cluster estimates it should have the capacity to transport a minimum of 2000mt in 2013.

Project Implementation

25. ETC: The ETC component of this project will undertake the following activities:

- Overall coordination of emergency telecommunications services through the deployment of a dedicated ETC coordinator who will be responsible for (a) the overall coordination of ETC activities with partner agencies, (b) coordination and liaison with the Government on behalf of the humanitarian community on licensing and importation requirements, and (c) the provision of information management services to support all ETC-related activities through a dedicated website (http://ictemergency.wfp.org/web/ictepr/countries/mali);

- Deployment of fully operational COMCENs that will provide both data/Internet service and common security communications service to the humanitarian community in Segou or San (note: decision on actual location to be taken by the Humanitarian Country Team, based on evolution of the situation in the North);

- Deployment of fully operational COMCENs that will provide both data/Internet service and common security communications service to the humanitarian community in Timbuctu, Kidal and Gao (note: dependent on access to these areas in the north);

- Recruitment and training of radio operators (5 per each location);

- Training of UN and NGO staff (in all new common operational areas) on proper use of "lifesaving" telecommunications tools and services.

- WFP and the ETC will endeavour to ensure gender balance in the recruitment of staff and training.

26. Logistics Cluster: The Logistics Cluster will implement the following activities under this SO:

- Maintain a dedicated Logistics Cluster Coordinator for the next 12 months, to facilitate the continuity of cluster activities.

- Currently, the Logistics Cluster has approximately 30 active members. In 2012, the average attendance has gone from 5 participants to an average of 16 participants per coordination meeting. In 2013 the network will be reinforced as attempts will be made to have more participation from local NGOs and relevant governmental officers (e.g.: Customs, OPAM, PAD, etc…).

- The logistics Cluster will continue to facilitate collaboration between partners and avoid duplication of efforts by ensuring activity and capacity awareness amongst users.

- One Information Management (IM) Officer will be deployed to support information sharing. The IM Officer will ensure that IM Products (Meeting Minutes, Snapshots, etc.) are made available to the humanitarian community, in both English and French, via a dedicated operations page on the Logistics Cluster website (www.logcluster.org/ops/sahel_crisis_2012).

- Provisions will also be made for a national assistant in case the context evolves and an increase in logistics services is required.

- Mobile Storage Units (MSUs): 10 MSUs will be purchased and stored in Bamako to be deployed and managed by WFP, on behalf of the Logistics Cluster, in locations where additional common storage capacity is identified as a logistics gap. When deployed the additional temporary storage space will be accessible to the humanitarian community free of charge. If the MSUs are needed beyond the time frame of this SO they will be loaned and managed by partners who will then report to the Logistics Cluster and WFP.

- Warehouse rental: Additional storage space will be made available to partners in the main WFP hubs in Bamako and Mopti for temporary storage, or to support transit operations on active or new corridors.

- In September 2012, the Logistics cluster organized training for 10 Malian Red Cross volunteers and 2 Malian WFP supervisors on MSU assembly techniques. Additional training will be provided in order to consolidate their capacity to assemble MSUs.

- WFP and the ETC will endeavour to ensure gender balance in the recruitment of staff and training.

- One WFP truck (10 tons) will be rehabilitated by the Logistics Cluster for the benefit of cluster members. The Logistics Cluster will have access to this truck for special, exceptional or emergency transport.

- Provision will be made to ensure transport for partners should the Logistics Cluster be requested to do so. WFP will make available spare transport capacity to the Logistics Cluster users.

- In the event of a fuel shortage, a system of fuel distribution will be provided ensuring a minimum of 10,000 Litre capacity. The location for this fuel deploy will be chosen to best meet the context. Equipment will be rented and installed by a supplier (selected after issuing a tender). Orders of fuel will be coordinated after validation of the partners and payments received in advance. Such a system will only be activated in case of an anticipated sustained shortage and will remain in place only during the gap period allowing partners to make their own arrangements to store fuel and organize supply.

Project Cost:

27. The total project cost for this Special Operation is **US$ 3,405,456** The summary of the budget is presented in the table below:

Description	Value (USD)
Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC)	
Office Supplies & Other Consumables	2,400
Communications & IT Services	66,600
Vehicle Running Costs and Maintenance	11,200
Operational Agreement Programming	1,085,300
Vehicles Leasing	12,960
TC/IT Equipment	838,708
Total Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC)	2,017,168
Direct Support Costs (DSC – Staff Salaries & other costs)	
C. Local Staff - Temporary Assistance (SC, SSA, Other)	267,046
D. International Consultancy	801,495
E. Other Staff Costs (incl. travel and allowances)	96,960
Total Direct Support Costs (DSC)	1,165,501
Total WFP Direct Costs	3,182,669
Indirect Support Costs (ISC – 7 percent)	222,787
Total WFP Costs (Overall Project Requirements)	3,405,456

(NB: Detailed budget in attachment – Annex 2)

28. The project is predominantly reliant on donor contributions.

Benefits:

29. The envisaged benefits for the ETC partners in Mali are as follows:

- The installation of COMCENs in key locations like Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal (as soon as UNDSS clears access and allows UN offices to reopen) will provide standard data and security communications services (emergency telecommunications and data connectivity networks) to humanitarian organizations operating in the Northern regions. Relay of information, reporting and security communications will be improved (faster and more secure) for the benefit of coordination and decision-making processes.

- In response to the different scenarios the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) will deploy and continue to ensure the availability of security and data communications facilities and services that remain critically important to effective humanitarian operations.

- Operational and cost effective MOSS-compliant facilities and common emergency telecommunications networks which will provide the humanitarian community with secure voice and data communications; this will include the establishment of services in Timbuktu, Gao , Kidal, Kayes and San or Segou.

- Radio checks as per MOSS requirements will improve monitoring of staff safety.

- The NGO community will be provided with access to a shared VHF repeater; where needed. This system will improve the network coverage for partners and therefore there communication capacity.

- A VHF base radio in the COMCENs to monitor the NGO repeater channel will provide continuous monitoring and operational support.

- Access to a range of UN HF channels that enables NGOs to selcall the COMCENs from any location will extend the partner's field communication capacity without overcrowding the network.

- On-going training courses on telecommunications equipment and services to all humanitarian workers in Mali will allow partners to maintain good practices on the network as well as providing capacity building.

30. The envisaged benefits for Logistics Cluster partners in Mali are as follows:

- As the Logistics Cluster will have MSUs in stock, the partners may request unit deployments at any time. Use of MSUs will be free of charge. Having trained assembly teams will ensure installation in a minimal time frame. MSUs will first be deployed to augment the Logistics Cluster capacity in Mopti and, if required, used by partners as a storage solution in Gao, Kidal or Timbuktu. These units may also be deployed as Bonded warehouses on alternative corridors routes. MSUs will give partners an immediate temporary storage and/or transit solution, will help securing the supply chain and will reduce the risk of shortages of essential cargo in the field. If no longer a necessity, the units can be dismantled and relocated until new needs arise, or stored on standby in Bamako or Mopti.

- New warehouse space totalling 1000 MT will be added in the WFP logistics Hubs of Bamako and Mopti and will be dedicated for use by the Logistics Cluster. This additional warehouse space will allow partners to respond within 48 hours of receiving a request for assistance. They will also facilitate transit storage to support the anticipated increase in operational activities and shipment volumes as a result of the on-going emergency. The warehouses may also be used for prepositioning contingency stocks if requested by partners.

- Through coordination meeting and adequate information management systems, the Logistics Cluster and its partners will continue to identify and anticipate the potential logistics gaps and deploy adapted operational solutions. Malian administrative procedures, rules and regulations will be collected and shared with

Logistics Cluster members, which will facilitate smooth relations with the authorities and other national organizations.

- In the event that the commercial fuel market is unable to provide adequate stocks of fuel to humanitarian organizations, the Logistics Cluster will set up and run a fuel depot. This depot will be installed within the UN compound. Participating organizations will be required to pay in advance for fuel and proof of payment must be presented before collection at the depot.

Monitoring & Evaluation

31. Key performance indicators will be reported at the end of the project and will include the following:

32. ETC:
- Number of assessments conducted – Target: 5
- Number of radio-rooms (COMCEN) established – Targets: 5
- Number of standard kits deployed – Targets: 5
- Number of common radio frequency licenses made available –Target: 17 HF, 5 VHF pairs, 4 VHF simplex
- Percentage of operational areas covered by data communications services - Target 100% (access allowed, ETC network will cover above operational locations, Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal, San or Segou and Kayes)
- Percentage of operational areas covered by common security telecommunications network - Target 100% (access allowed, ETC network will cover above operational locations, Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal, San or Segou and Kayes)
- Number of UN agencies and NGOs provided access to data communications services - Target: 32
- Number of UN agencies and NGOs provided access to the security telecommunications network - Target: 32
- Number of partners using data services - Target: 32
- Number of UN agency and NGO staff trained in radio communications – Target: 175 (Radio usage UN & NGO)
- Ratio of men and women recruited or trained: 50%
- Number of Standard Operating Procedures developed and implemented - Target: 1 (Standard SOP)

33. Logistics:

- Number of agencies and organizations using Logistics coordination services - Target: 32
- Number of agencies and organizations using storage facilities - Target: 15
- Number of bulletins, maps and other logistics information produced and shared - Target: 48
- Number of training sessions / workshops organized - Target: 1
- Number of humanitarian partners / Cluster participants trained - Target: 20
- Ratio of men and women recruited or trained: 50%
- Number of assessments/surveys conducted - Target: 3

- Number of contingency plans developed or updated - Target: 1
- Number of Logistics Capacity Assessments developed or updated - Target: 1
- Total warehouse storage space made available (m3) - Target: 1200 (maximum)
- Number of mobile storage tents made available - Target: 10
- Percentage of warehouse capacity available vs. utilization (storage warehouse) - Target: 85%
- Percentage of requests for storage services fulfilled - Target: 100%
- Transport capacity made available (mt) - Target: 2000 mt (only if bottleneck in market transport)
- Number of trucks made available - Target: 1
- Percentage of requests for surface transportation fulfilled - Target: 100%

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

Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning

35. 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).

36. **Contextual Risks.** Security in Mali can deteriorate, which may result in limitations on humanitarian travel and cargo movements. The ETC and Logistics Cluster will work in close coordination with WFP FSO and UNDSS to ensure timely communication on the security situation at destinations and will plan its operations accordingly. The main risks identified are:
    – Political instability, social unrest and increase of criminality
    – Economic downturn
    – Military intervention in the North
    – Ethnic & inter-armed groups confrontations

37. **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. The ETC and the Logistics Cluster will be able to meet the increase in humanitarian needs through having contingency plans ready, coordination and technical personnel trained and deployed structures and equipment secured in stocks and accessible at will. Contingency funds for capacity augmentation (warehouses and transport) are a necessity considering the uncertainty of the context and the possible aggravation of security, society and economy.

38. **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 ETC, the Logistics Cluster and their respective forum of partner's efforts will continue to monitor the needs, evaluate the capacities and evaluate the necessity and relevancy for the ETC and the Logistics Cluster to remain activated.

Exit Strategy

39. It is difficult to clearly and accurately forecast how the security in the North and the economic situation in the South will unfold. The ETC and Logistics Cluster will monitor and reevaluate the necessity for the structures and equipment to remain operational. It is a necessity for all structures and services to be contracted on a short terms basis. Once the respective forums agree that the services are no longer a necessity, the clusters will initiate a request for the release of rented structures, disassembly of COMCENs and MSUs and return assets to WFP stocks. The logistics Cluster will ensure coordination and information sharing through regular contact with partners, regular coordination meetings, until the ETC and Logistics Cluster are cleared by the HCT for deactivation.

RECOMMENDATION

40. This Special Operation covering the period from the 1st January to the 31st December 2013 at a total cost to WFP of **US\$ 3,405,456** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director