



**WFP (Nepal)**  
**SPECIAL OPERATION SO (200848)**

Country:	Nepal
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Logistics and Telecommunications Augmentation and Coordination in Response to the Earthquake in Nepal
Total cost (US\$):	US\$ 25,573,258
Duration:	28 April – 27 July 2015 (3 months)

### **Executive Summary**

On Saturday 25th April 2015, an earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter Scale was recorded in Nepal. Reports indicate a large number of casualties and widespread damage throughout the affected areas. The Government of Nepal has declared a state of emergency in the country.

The geographical area affected by the earthquake includes mountainous and remote areas, increasing the potential for logistics constraints on operations. Extensive damage to infrastructure in the affected areas has been reported. The airport of Kathmandu is operational but due to its small size it is expected to become congested when the large amount of relief items start coming through.

Through this special operation WFP will, in its capacity as Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Cluster lead, support the relief efforts of the Humanitarian Community and of the Nepali authorities. The special operation provides for:

- Logistics coordination, GIS mapping and information management for the logistics response.
- Logistics augmentation including: strategic airlifts and other air cargo services, temporary inter-agency storage and cargo reception facilities, a dedicated truck fleet for surface transport of humanitarian cargo within Nepal and overland from India if needed and emergency road repairs.
- Provision of emergency telecommunications required for the humanitarian community to respond to the crisis.
- Engineering assessments of existing logistics infrastructure as well as office structures and the set-up of office and accommodation facilities as and if required.

This special operation will have an initial duration of 3 months at a total estimated cost of US\$ 25,573,258.

## **Project Background**

1. On Saturday 25th April 2015, an earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter Scale was recorded in Nepal, 80 km to the North-West of Kathmandu and 68 Km east of Pokhara. Current reports suggest the capital has suffered substantial destruction to critical infrastructure, including buildings, roads, electricity, water supply and communication networks. Kathmandu Valley, an area closer to the epicentre is expected to be worse affected. Reports indicate a large number of casualties and widespread damage throughout the affected areas. The Government of Nepal has declared a state of emergency in the country.
2. The geographical area affected by the earthquake includes mountainous and remote areas, increasing the potential for logistics constraints on operations. Extensive damage to infrastructure in the affected areas has been reported. The airport of Kathmandu is operational but due to its small size it is expected to become congested when the large amount of relief items start coming through.
3. In addition, electricity outages, inaccessible roads and lack of telecommunications, particularly in rural areas, are also hampering the rescue and relief efforts. Given the low depth of the earthquake, aftershocks are expected to continue for some time. Aftershocks are expected to cause further damage and debilitate already weak infrastructure.
4. Furthermore the damages to governmental buildings, the United Nations Offices and other humanitarian actors have not yet been assessed.
5. WFP's operations will mostly be based on a Logistics Response Plan which was drafted in 2013 as the first step in a collaborative process with the international humanitarian community (INGOs, UN Agencies and Donor organisations), in order to be able to support the government of Nepal and to respond to a potential earthquake as quickly, efficiently and effectively as possible, if requested to do so. This plan included the establishment of a humanitarian hub in Kathmandu International Airport, which is running but in need of staff augmentation for this emergency response.

## **Project Justification**

6. Given the scale of the disaster, WFP urgently needs to augment its logistics and emergency telecommunications capacity to ensure sufficient assets and staff are in place to support the humanitarian community.
7. The magnitude of the disaster, number of people affected and the lack of information available call for a coordinated and efficient response from the international community proportionate to the scope of the disaster to avoid bottlenecks and possible overlaps. The Logistics Cluster was activated on the 26 April. WFP, in its role as the lead of this Cluster, will deploy staff to lead and coordinate the logistics response.
8. The urgency of relief items and equipment needed at the beginning of the operation will require coordinated strategic airlifts from the UNHRD network.

9. The expected volumes of relief items being brought into the country, in conjunction with damaged infrastructure and limited capacity, will require the setting up of staging areas and logistics hubs in- and outside Nepal as well as a number of operations and logistics hubs in the affected areas.
10. In order to maximize the use of available transport capacity in country, a dedicated leased truck fleet will be made available in Kathmandu for humanitarian cargo movement to affected areas. In addition, as some areas are not accessible by road, this Special Operation makes provision for the delivery of vital humanitarian cargo such as medical supplies, emergency communications equipment, and operational support items to isolated locations with one medium-size fixed wing cargo aircraft and one medium-size cargo helicopter.
11. The earthquake has also caused damage to road infrastructure in-country. WFP will assess the roads and identify spots where emergency repairs can be made to ensure transportation of relief items to otherwise inaccessible areas.
12. The fundamental information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure of the WFP offices and many of the other humanitarian agencies in the area of operations have been destroyed or severely damaged. It is likely that new temporary common inter-agency office facilities will be established to accommodate multiple humanitarian agencies; including WFP. This special operation will equip the new offices with the requisite ICT infrastructure and related services to meet the individual requirements of the various agencies. The disruption to the telecommunications infrastructure and services, particularly in remote rural areas, makes communications difficult and potentially impacts the safety, security and operational capability of a coordinated humanitarian response. In its role as the lead of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), which was activated on 26 April, WFP will ensure that the telecommunications infrastructure - data and radio networks - are also sufficient to coordinate the humanitarian response.
13. As a result of the earthquake WFP offices and staff housing needs to be assessed to ensure they are still safe and have not suffered any damage during the earthquakes. Therefore there is a need to deploy an engineering team to assess if there is a need to set-up office and accommodation facilities.

### **Project Objective(s)**

14. The main objectives of this operation are to:
  - Enhance coordination, predictability, timeliness and efficiency of the emergency logistics response under the Cluster approach.
  - Support the delivery of humanitarian aid to affected population by augmenting the logistics capacity by:
    - Deployment of logistics staff;
    - Coordinating strategic airlifts and other air cargo services;
    - Setting up of temporary forwarding hubs in- and outside Nepal consisting of storage facilities and office space;

- Provision of surface transportation for the humanitarian community;
- Carrying out emergency road repairs.
- Make available reliable and independent data and voice communications services which are recognized as a priority for a successful humanitarian response.
- Augment data and voice connectivity as the existing structure will be stretched to capacity by the surge of humanitarian personnel.
- Assess and provide safe and secure office and accommodation space for staff.

## **Project Implementation**

15. This special operation accommodates the essential logistics and emergency telecommunications requirements to ensure the delivery of key relief items to the affected population and the necessary operational support to the humanitarian community for its crisis response.
16. Given the rapidly evolving situation on the ground, the below implementation plan may be revised as necessary. The activities will include:

### **Logistics Cluster Coordination**

Logistics Cluster coordination cells will be set-up in Kathmandu to support overall coordination of the Logistics Cluster operation in Nepal with support from WFP's Regional Bureau in Bangkok and the Global Logistics Cluster in Rome.

In order to facilitate a unified response effort on behalf of the humanitarian community, the following coordination services will be provided to minimise duplication of logistics activities during the response: Regular Logistics Cluster Coordination meetings will be held with partners for the purpose of briefing on, updating, and revising operational plans as needed; information sharing; and analysis of existing and emerging logistics gaps & bottlenecks. Logistics capacity will also be augmented in Pokhara and Birangj through the deployment of dedicated logistics staff. In addition, WFP as the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, will liaise with the National Authorities to coordinate civil military interaction with national and international military entities. WFP will focus primarily on logistics and operational coordination for the use of military assets in relief activities.

The following Information Management (IM) activities will be undertaken by the WFP in the interest of promoting and facilitating the sharing of logistics information among all organisations conducting response operations. To ensure an efficient and effective response by the humanitarian community, WFP as the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster will collect, consolidate, and share information, including GIS, related to on-going activities, key infrastructure, important procedures, such as customs, access constraints, and available storage and transport capacity in the affected areas.

## **Strategic airlifts and other air cargo services**

In order to facilitate the immediate deployment of the support equipment required for the start-up of operations, this Special Operation makes provision for strategic airlifts from the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot network to Nepal. This could also include airlifts from India, directly into the affected area if possible.

In addition, as some areas are not accessible by road, this Special Operation makes provision for the delivery of vital humanitarian cargo such as medical supplies, emergency communications equipment, and operational support items to isolated locations with one medium-size fixed wing cargo aircraft and one medium-size cargo helicopter. The cargo aircraft is capable of using unprepared runways for takeoffs and landings while the helicopter will be used to access restricted areas with limited facilities to fixed wing operation. The helicopter will operate out of Kathmandu for a period of three months while the fixed wing cargo aircraft will provide a link to Pokhara from locations such as Lucknow in India for a duration of one month. Suitable qualified WFP Aviation staff will be deployed to manage the air transport component of this Special Operation.

## **Set-up of logistics operations and hubs in country**

A Humanitarian Staging Area (HSA) in Kathmandu International Airport has been set-up as part of the Logistics Response Plan drafted in 2013, as a contingency plan in the event of a natural disaster. The HSA has been established to avoid congestion at the main entry points of affected areas and ease the flow of life-saving commodities, where large-scale relief activities are being undertaken. Staff will be sent from UNHRD to augment the staffing capacity in the HSA.

A logistics hub will be established in Birganj at the border with India and will be one of the main road entry points to rapidly forward relief cargo to the affected areas of Nepal. Furthermore, temporary storage space, with the capacity to scale up rapidly if needed, will be made available to humanitarian organisations in three smaller logistics hubs to be set-up at strategic positions in country including Pokhara.

## **Staging areas outside of Nepal**

Kathmandu airport will very likely not be able to cope with the amount of humanitarian supplies being brought into the country. This Special Operation therefore includes possibility to setup hubs in India to receive cargo. A hub will be established in Lucknow airport and possibly also in Calcutta to receive and consolidate cargo and forward into Nepal.

## **Surface transport**

A dedicated leased truck fleet will be mobilized and made available to the humanitarian community to provide transport from the airport and other hubs to the extended deliver points sites. The fleet can also be used to transport humanitarian relief items from the hubs in India if needed. These deliveries will be supported by emergency road repairs to facilitate the access to the affected areas. WFP as the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster will coordinate the logistics operation and the provision of logistics services. The cargo moved by these services will be dispatched based on priorities set by the Humanitarian Coordinator.

### **Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) activation**

The project will provide emergency telecommunications services by establishing a robust inter-agency emergency telecommunications system and communications centers (COMCEN) in the common operational areas. These ICT and ET facilities will allow humanitarian workers to better coordinate assessments, rescue and relief operations in all the affected areas. Specifically, the project will provide:

- Overall coordination of emergency telecommunications services will be ensured through the deployment of a dedicated Coordinator who will be responsible for (a) the overall coordination of IT activities with partner organizations, (b) coordination and liaison with the Nepali authorities to support their interaction with the humanitarian community on all IT related matters and (c) the provision of information management services to support all IT-related activities.
- A comprehensive ICT assessment of all sites and deployment of necessary equipment to establish services including obtaining common licenses (as required) and development and implementation of Standard Operating Procedures in conjunction with and in support of the Nepali authorities for the current emergency and for future disaster preparedness.
- Standardized ICT platforms and procedures to avoid duplication and ensure cost-effective services (MOSS compliant communications).

### **Provision of safe and secure office space and staff accommodation**

Due to the damage to WFP facilities and support infrastructure there is an urgent need to assess WFP offices and accommodation in the affected areas to ascertain usability and to identify needed works. Secondly, in order to support WFP operations in the delivery of food and supplies, a full infrastructure assessment is needed of key roads, bridges, and buildings in order to establish the current condition of supply routes and storage facilities. In the short term, this approach will provide accurate access information to WFP and humanitarian partners during the ongoing response, which is critical for safety issues and accessing those beneficiaries most in need. These assessments will further aim to establish the feasibility of needed rehabilitation and construction activities. Reviewing of contractor capacity; access to equipment and materials; and the development of cost estimations will also be required in order to prioritize needed work. A team of dedicated engineers and support staff will ensure that technical inputs are given to WFP and partners in a timely manner along with support for ongoing construction activities and the needs of partners. WFP through its engineering unit will

continue to provide back office support to ensure maximum utilization of teams on the ground. WFP will use its in-house engineering capacities, standby partners, and the private sector to undertake these activities in country.

A number of construction and rehabilitation activities have already been requested by the WFP Country Office, with the first priority being construction of temporary office facilities and accommodation. Specific requirements will only become clear once assessments have been completed. The status of overland access to communities in affected areas is being assessed but initial indicators are that rehabilitation works are required. Minor works will be undertaken throughout the immediate response, with full assessments identifying longer term rehabilitation works. As first responders, there may be a potential need to expand the operations further to provide the humanitarian community with a range of engineering services: once key assessments have been completed. WFP can also through its partners in the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP) deploy a humanitarian basecamp should need be.

### **Project Management**

17. The WFP Nepal Country Director will be the Funds Manager for this SO and the WFP Nepal Head of Finance will be the Allotment Manager.
18. The WFP Nepal Logistics Emergency Coordinator will be the overall Project Manager for this SO and responsible for the implementation in coordination with the Logistics Cluster, WFP Aviation, Engineering and the ETC.
19. Logistics Cluster Coordination Meetings will be held with UN Agencies, NGOs, and donors in different locations in Nepal, in order to identify and monitor logistics gaps and reach common solutions.
20. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster will host local ETC meetings in different locations in the country to share information and plan activities. In addition, global ETC meetings will be hosted, as required by the project, with participants from across the humanitarian community.

### **Project Cost and Benefits**

21. This special operation has a total cost of US\$ 25,573,258 and is expected to provide the necessary logistics and emergency telecommunications support to life saving emergency operations in Nepal.
22. This Special Operation intends to prevent and alleviate gaps and bottlenecks in the humanitarian logistics response and facilitate an uninterrupted supply of life-saving and life-sustaining goods and services to those affected by the earthquake in Nepal. It will enable the humanitarian community to move relief items into the affected area in a more reliable and predictable way, while preventing overlaps in the response.

23. The ETC component of the special operation will ensure increased staff safety and operations reliability by reestablishing and augmenting the communication and data networks. Furthermore it will provide data connectivity services in common operational areas and Emergency Telecommunications Coordination support in support of the humanitarian community's relief efforts.



## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

24. The key performance indicators will be:

- Number of staging areas and logistics hubs established (3)
- Percentage of service requests to handle, store and/or transport cargo fulfilled (85%)
- Number of agencies and organizations utilizing transport and storage services (30)
- Number of bulletins, maps, and other logistics information products produced and shared (40)
- Meet with the partners on a weekly basis and accordingly meet with the governmental counterparts in order to coordinate frequency management procedures.
- Organizations receiving services from Logistics Cluster and responding to a user survey rate service satisfaction as 80% or above.
- Number of common operational areas provided access to voice and data communications services. Target: xx
- Number of common operational areas provided with security telecommunications network: Target xx
- Organizations receiving services from ETC and responding to a user survey rate service satisfaction of 80% or above
- Number of assessments completed of WFP Facilities (20)
- Number of Infrastructure assessments completed in support of WFP and humanitarian operations (15)
- Completion of minor work activities in support of WFP operations (3)

25. Operational reports will be provided on a regular basis

26. The humanitarian situation will be monitored and assessed on a regular basis in order to capture any necessary changes in a budget revision in due time should this be deemed necessary.

## **Risk Analysis and Contingency Planning**

27. Demands for storage and transportation exceed current forecasts

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Continued assessment of availability of adequate commercial transportation and storage facilities; and
- Availability of prepositioned equipment in UNHRDs to meet the needs of the humanitarian community.

28. Customs / transit delays for ICT equipment arrival that might delay planned work

- In regard to the importation and licensing of telecommunications equipment, discussions on clearance and licensing of required approvals will be initiated at the very onset of the response

29. Lack of funding

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Actively provide inputs in ongoing appeals and donor outreach materials.

**RECOMMENDATION**

This Special Operation 200848 covering the period from 28 April 2015 to 27 July 2015 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ 25,573,258 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director, with the budget provided.

**APPROVAL**

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Etharin Cousin  
Executive Director

