



WFP SYRIA ¹
SPECIAL OPERATION SO (200788)

Country:	Syria
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Logistics & Telecommunications Augmentation and Coordination to Support Humanitarian Operations in Syria
Total cost (US\$):	USD\$ 11,116,345
Duration:	12 months (1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015)

Executive Summary

WFP, in its role as the lead agency of the Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters, aims to launch this Special Operation (SO) to augment logistics and emergency telecommunications in support of the ongoing WFP Emergency Operation in Syria as well as to provide the humanitarian community with adequate logistics and ICT capabilities and enhanced coordination mechanisms to deliver relief items to affected populations in Syria.

With the current conflict in its fourth year, and with an ever changing political and security landscape, it is foreseen that existing humanitarian challenges are set to continue. The Logistics Cluster will thus not only need to continue its existing support to the humanitarian community in Syria, but in line with a 'whole of Syria approach' provide support to regional partners responding to the Syria emergency through a holistic support strategy.

In addition, the Logistics Cluster is moving towards a cost recovery modality in which some common services will be offered on a cost-recovery basis, whilst keeping critical services such as inter-agency convoys, warehouse storage, and a limited number of airlifts free-to-user.

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) will focus on implementing secure telecommunications services to facilitate the work of the humanitarian community. This includes augmenting VHF radio infrastructure, further investment in radio training sessions, and continuing to build the capacity of radio rooms in Syria.

Project Background

1. As a result of several years of clashes and civil unrest in Syria, more than 7.6 million people have been displaced internally, requiring a concerted effort by the humanitarian community to provide displaced families with critical aid, including food and non-food items. Overall, an estimated 12.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.²
2. Upon recommendation of the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator, the Logistics Cluster and Emergency Telecommunication Cluster were formally activated in January 2013, focusing on logistics and emergency telecommunication services in support of humanitarian activities into and within Syria, including operational support bases and delivery corridors from neighbouring countries. The SO services began earlier, in July 2012 and were ramped up after formal Cluster activation in 2013.

² OCHA Humanitarian Needs Overview, November 2014

Project Justification

3. Changing regional dynamics, the unpredictability of regional border crossings; logistics access constraints; an unstable transport market; the evolving security situation; technology-based telecommunications requirements; and the need for coordination of an increasing number of humanitarian actors across the region and inside Syria, are some of the key challenges to be met by the Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters' regional approach for 2015.
4. The mandate of this logistics and ETC SO is essential to fill logistics and communication gaps faced by the humanitarian community. This SO builds upon and furthers the activities of SO 200477, which closes in December 2014, and ensures an important level of continuity in the assistance provided to the Cluster partners. This includes a number of ongoing and expanded common logistics and ETC service activities already in place since July 2012, and through which over 20 humanitarian organizations in Syria have been provided with essential transportation, storage, coordination, and communications support.
5. WFP, as logistics and telecommunications provider of last resort, will through the Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters continue its coordination, information management, and common services provision, which includes over-land transport, inter-agency humanitarian convoys, cross-border convoys, strategic fuel storage, fuel for winterization activities, airlifts, warehouse storage, and access to internet, voice telephony, and radio services.
6. In an effort to increase cost effectiveness and sustainability of operations, the Logistics Cluster is also gradually moving to a cost-recovery modality for some common services, while keeping critical services such as inter-agency convoys, warehouse storage, and a limited number of airlifts free-to-user.
7. As part of a 'Whole of Syria' approach for 2015, the provision of cluster services takes into account regional logistics needs, and in particular support to partners positioned in logistics corridors through the neighbouring countries of Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey.
8. As lead agency of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster, WFP will address possible gaps in ICT services by providing ETC coordination and information management to the humanitarian community. In addition, ETC will conduct needs assessment missions and ICT augmentation in up to two locations.

Project Objective(s)

9. The project aims to provide the humanitarian community with a set of secure and tailored logistical and emergency telecommunication services. This aim is not only to fill logistical and telecommunication gaps as provider of last resort, but also strengthen logistics networks and build the capacity of local and humanitarian partners.
10. Improve inter-agency logistics and emergency telecommunications coordination and information management to support the humanitarian community's response.
11. Provide logistics services inclusive of surface transportation, humanitarian airlifts and warehousing to humanitarian organizations responding to the Syria crisis.

12. Support inter-agency emergency telecommunications coordination in areas with a humanitarian community presence.

Project Implementation

13. WFP logistics contracts with transport companies and warehouse providers will be utilized for the provision of Logistics Cluster services. Logistics and ET Cluster activities will include:

A. Cost recovery:

I. Component 1: Common Logistics Services on a cost-recovery basis

- i. Common transport in Syria and logistics corridors (in principle to all destinations in Syria, access and security permitting, and logistics corridors through Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan);
- ii. Humanitarian airlifts to isolated areas as requested by humanitarian partners based on need.

This component constitutes approximately 8% of the total budget. It covers primarily staffing and support costs, the actual services being on a cost recovery basis.

II. Component 2: Fuel purchase (contingency stocks)

- i. The Cluster, through WFP as one of the only organizations able to import fuel into Syria, is able to purchase and provide fuel to humanitarian partners.
- ii. Fuel stocks (200,000 liters) will be procured for distribution by WFP to targeted IDP Shelters and medical centers for cooking, heating, and essential services as part of the Joint UN Winterization Strategy.

This component constitutes approximately 9% of the total budget, inclusive of staffing structure.

B. Free-to-user

I. Component 3: Logistics coordination and information management

- i. Coordination across the region (Gaziantep, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, Tartous, Qamishly, Homs, and Aleppo); and
- ii. Information management and mapping.
- iii. Maintenance and population of a dedicated webpage for Cluster documents and updates.

This component constitutes approximately 11% of the total budget, inclusive of staffing and coordination structure.

II. Component 4: Logistics services on a free to user basis

- i. Joint humanitarian convoys to the most difficult-to-access locations in the country;
- ii. Cross-border humanitarian convoys: coordination and trans-shipment services;
- iii. Emergency Airlifts (x6) to the most isolated locations in Syria budgeted for the year (after which, airlifts will be on a cost-recovery basis);
- iv. Common storage in Syria (at Cluster warehousing facilities across the country);

- v. Continued use of the Relief Item Tracking Application (RITA) to track non-food cargo for accountability and transparency across the region;
- vi. Capacity building and logistics training of partners as per their identified needs (including warehouse management, surface transport, port operations);

This component constitutes approximately 60% of the total budget, inclusive of staffing structure.

III. **Component 5: Emergency Telecommunications Cluster response.**

WFP, as lead agency for the ETC, will provide essential telecommunications requirements and the necessary ETC information management and coordination support and services to the humanitarian community to respond to the crisis.

Specifically, this SO caters for the following:

- i. Maintenance and expansion of common telecommunication services in operational areas including augmentation of the current inter-agency emergency telecommunications system and establishment of communication centers (COMCEN) in operational hubs;
- ii. Deploy thirty one (31) inter-agency radio operators at operational locations throughout Syria
- iii. Conduct further radio training and IT emergency management training to humanitarian organizations operating in Syria;
- iv. Share information amongst the humanitarian community relating to common services;
- v. Coordination and information management including hosting regular global and local ETC meetings; and
- vi. Conduct assessment missions and initiate projects to overcome gaps in IT service delivery.

This component constitutes approximately 11% of the total budget, inclusive of staffing structure.

Project Management

14. The WFP Syria Country Director will be the Fund Manager for this SO and the WFP Syria Head of Finance will be the Allotment Manager.
15. The two sub-funded Clusters will be managed as follows:
 - A. Logistics augmentation and coordination will be managed by the WFP Syria Head of Logistics.
 - B. Emergency Telecommunications augmentation and coordination will be managed by the Regional IT / ETC Coordinator.
16. Logistics Cluster Coordination Meetings will be held with UN Agencies, NGOs, and donors in different locations in Syria (Damascus, Tartous, Qamishly, Homs), as well as across the region (Amman, Beirut, Gaziantep), in order to identify and monitor logistics gaps and reach common solutions.
17. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster will host local ETC meetings in different locations in the region to share information and plan activities. In addition, monthly global ETC meetings will be hosted with participants from across the humanitarian community.

Risk Management

18. A number of contextual, operational, and programmatic risk factors could impact the successful implementation of this Special Operation. Possible mitigation measures are also included below.

A. Lack of funding due to several Level 3 Emergency Responses taking place simultaneously

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Close alignment with the 2015 Strategic Response Plan;
- Ensure engagement with traditional Syria SO donors and actively provide inputs in ongoing appeals and donor outreach materials/opportunities.

B. Closure of corridors due to insecurity or political developments, affecting access and cargo deliveries

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Maintenance of standby arrangements for alternative corridors and close coordination with HCT and other relevant authorities to intervene or resolve issues with the appropriate authorities on behalf of the humanitarian community.

C. Demands for common services exceeds current forecasts

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Ability to scale up staffing through rosters and identification of surge capacity;
- Availability of adequate storage facilities and ETC/IT services; and
- Availability of prepositioned equipment to meet the needs of the humanitarian community.

D. Customs / transit delays for the ETC equipment arrival that might delay planned ETC work and shift the duration of the project duration

The risk will be mitigated through:

- Field assistance team to ship equipment on time and COs to start customs clearance procedures early.
- Request the HC/REC to intervene / resolve the issue with appropriate authorities on behalf of the UN system.

19. Building upon ongoing technical support and capacity building efforts to local authorities and humanitarian partners; the Logistics Cluster will continue to provide capacity building training and support to partners in areas such as warehouse management, customs clearance, and transport as part of its long-term/handover strategy.

Project Cost and Benefits

20. The estimated project cost is US\$ 11,116,345 (Logistics Cluster: \$9,805,357/ ETC: \$1,310,988)
21. This Special Operation will continue to enable the humanitarian community in Syria and in neighbouring countries to move larger quantities of humanitarian relief items to affected areas in Syria in a more reliable, safer and predictable way, as well as to facilitate communication and coordination, whilst preventing an overlap in response.
22. As the services under this Special Operation will be offered to humanitarian partners on both a free to user and cost recovery basis, the cost savings made by partners will allow additional investment in projects for affected populations, whilst on the other hand promoting the cost effectiveness and sustainability of cluster services.

23. Coordination services at both a local and regional level will help prevent overlap in response and identify any potential gaps when conducting cross-line, cross-border and regular response activities.

Monitoring & Evaluation

24. Measurement of the value added by the SO activities will be conducted via the Standard Project Report (SPR) for 2015. A detailed Lessons Learned Mission will be conducted in order to ensure that best practices highlighted during the operation are compiled and carried over to future operations. This will ultimately allow for a faster, better tailored and more cost- effective response mechanism in future emergencies.

25. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for this project include:

Logistics

- A. Percentage of service requests to handle, store and/or transport cargo fulfilled
- B. Number of agencies and organizations utilizing transport and storage services
- C. Number of bulletins, maps, and other logistics information products produced and shared
- D. Percentage of fuel requests fulfilled
- E. Number of inter-agency humanitarian convoys undertaken

Emergency Telecommunications

- A. Number of bulletins, maps, and other emergency telecommunications information products produced and shared
- B. Number of humanitarian workers who receive radio training
- C. Number of operational areas where common ETC services are deployed
- D. Number of ETC coordination meetings held across the region
- E. Percentage of customer of satisfaction measured across the region.

26. The reports for this project include Monthly Logistics Cluster Reports and ETC SitReps, Operational Overviews, and the end of year Standard Project Report (SPR).

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ 11,116,345 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director

Annexes :

List of acronymes

BR	Budget Revision
CD	Country Director
EMOP	Emergency Operation
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
RITA	Relief Item Tracking Application
SitRep	Situation Report
SPR	Standard Project Report
SO	Special Operation
VHF	Very High Frequency

Map

Syria ETC Service Map (October 2014):

