



WFP (ETHIOPIA) SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200711

Country:	Ethiopia
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service in Ethiopia
Total cost (US\$):	US\$ 8,978,222
Duration:	12 months (from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015)

Executive Summary

WFP established its United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) in 2007 to facilitate access for humanitarian staff to reach remote and vulnerable areas of Ethiopia. Classified as one of the world's most underdeveloped countries, nearly 10 percent of Ethiopia's population of 85 million is vulnerable to food insecurity and depends on national safety-net programmes.¹ As of June 2014, an estimated 2.7 million people² require humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs for survival. Since July 2011, humanitarian activities in south-eastern Ethiopia, and in particular Dolo Ado, have increased due to the influx of refugees escaping civil unrest, violence, and drought in south-central Somalia. In August 2014, Ethiopia became the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, with more than 650,000 refugees from Somalia, Eritrea and South Sudan.

UNHAS plays a vital role in the overall humanitarian response by ensuring reliable access to key project implementation sites. The Special Operation (SO) 200711 will be managed by the WFP Ethiopia Country Office for the period 1 January 2015 - 31 December 2015 at a budgeted cost of US\$8,978,222. The interests of the humanitarian community will continue to be represented by the UNHAS User Group Committee (UGC) composed of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies and donor representatives. The UGC meets regularly and handles administrative matters, provides feedback on service quality and identifies destinations to be served. The budget requirements will be raised through donor contributions (approx. 85%) and a partial cost-recovery (approx. 15%) in the form of ticket sales. The fleet will be composed of three aircrafts serving seven regular destinations.

Fleet composition and operational routes have been determined after needs assessments and consultations with relevant stakeholders. The project will be implemented through standard WFP management structures and support systems and regularly reviewed in accordance with standard procedures in order to minimize risks and ensure operational efficiency.

Project Background

1. In spite of significant economic growth during the last decade, Ethiopia remains one of the world's most underdeveloped countries, ranked 173 out of 187 countries in the 2013 Human Development Index.³

¹ Source: <http://www.unocha.org/eastern-africa/about-us/about-ocha-eastern-africa/ethiopia>

² ACAPS, Global Emergency Overview, Snapshot 19-25 November 2014, p. 49

³ Human Development Report 2014, <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr14-report-en-1.pdf>

2. UNHAS Ethiopia was established in 2007 to facilitate access to vulnerable populations mainly in the remote areas of the Somali Region. Since then, the service has undergone several reviews to correspond to the needs of the humanitarian community. SO 200711 is a continuation of SO 200364 which ran from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2014. In 2015, UNHAS Ethiopia will serve seven regular locations with a fleet of three fixed wing aircrafts.
3. The interests of the humanitarian community are represented through the UGC composed of NGOs, UN agencies and donor organizations. The Terms of Reference for the UGC are limited to administrative matters and include decisions on destinations to be served and matters relating to quality of the service.
4. Through regular meetings with the UGC and through other stakeholder consultations, a strong demand for the continuation of UNHAS operations in Ethiopia to facilitate access to hard-to-reach locations has been expressed.
5. More than 35 user organizations comprising NGOs, UN agencies, donor organizations and diplomatic missions rely on UNHAS to implement and monitor humanitarian activities in Ethiopia. Between January and October 2014, UNHAS Ethiopia transported 7,548 passengers⁴ and 38 mt of light cargo. It also carried out 66 evacuations and had 25 special flights. A detailed summary of activities is indicated in Table 1 below:

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF UNHAS ETHIOPIA ACTIVITIES											
2014											
MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	TOTAL
HOURS	180	192	171	239	187	237	193	208	197	165	1,969
PAX	739	745	717	732	1,009	1,129	734	627	599	517	7,548
CARGO	2.3	3.1	3.3	4.2	1.9	7.8	3.3	3.3	5.0	3.8	38
EVACUATIONS	12	10	8	4	8	7	5	5	7	0	66
SPECIAL FLIGHTS	3	1	0	5	0	1	7	4	4	0	25

Project Justification

6. In 2015, the provision of air services will be continued through SO 200711 in order to facilitate humanitarian staff travel to various locations in Ethiopia. In particular, UNHAS is deemed necessary due to the following factors:

- a. Continuous Need for Humanitarian Assistance:

⁴ The passenger figure reflects the total number of passengers transported, including transits. Not taking the transits into account, the total number of passengers between January and October 2014 amounts to 6,043.

Humanitarian needs in Ethiopia persist. As of June 2014, an estimated 2.7 million people were food insecure, especially in drought-prone areas that also suffer critical water shortages.⁵

The humanitarian community in Ethiopia will continue to implement and monitor programmes in 2015, with operational activities mainly based in the Somali Region of Ethiopia (Dire Dawa, Dolo, Gode, Jijiga, Kebri-Dehar and Warder).

b. Lack of Viable Alternatives:

Vast distances between beneficiary sites make travel by surface means impractical for humanitarian actors. In addition, security remains a serious concern in these areas. During the wet season, access by road is perennially cut off to many locations due to the poor state of the road network throughout the country. Currently, the national airline, Ethiopian Airlines, is the only available commercial air service that meets international standards. However, they do not cover most destinations in need of humanitarian activity, presumably, due to the remoteness of these locations. Therefore, UNHAS is required to enable humanitarian organizations access people in need in order provide an effective humanitarian intervention.

c. Continued Demand

The continuation of UNHAS activities in Ethiopia in 2015 has been requested by the UNHAS UGC. During its meeting of 5 November 2014, the UGC deliberated on the need for continuation of the services given the unpredictable security situation, which limits the use of surface transport. It also confirmed the continuation of relief activities in the region and emphasized the need for UNHAS given the unavailability of safe commercial alternatives to most remote destinations where humanitarian assistance is provided. Furthermore, destinations to be served and frequency of flights were confirmed through various informal consultations with stakeholders and users.

Project Objectives

7. The objectives of this SO are:

- To provide safe, effective and efficient access to beneficiaries and project implementation sites for NGOs, UN agencies, donor organizations and diplomatic missions;
- To transport light cargo, such as medical supplies, high energy foods, and information and communication technology (ICT) equipment;
- To provide timely medical and security evacuations for humanitarian staff.

The objectives above are linked to WFP's Strategic Results Framework and are examples of Strategic Objective 1: Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies.

Project Implementation

8. In 2015, UNHAS Ethiopia will continue to operate two Cessna Caravans (C208) and one Dash 8. All aircrafts will be based in Addis Ababa and serve seven regular destinations (Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa, Dolo Ado, Gode, Jijiga, Kebri-Dehar, and Warder), with the target of transporting a monthly average of 800 passengers for approximately 35 user organizations. A survey has been launched in order to assess any other potential needs that UNHAS should cover.

⁵ ACAPS, Global Emergency Overview, Snapshot 19-25 November 2014, p. 49

9. Stakeholder meetings, including with the UGC, will be organized on regular basis. Additionally, surveys will be launched on customer satisfaction and access provision with an aim to receiving feedback from a wider audience and tailoring the use of the assets to real demands.
10. The project will implement standard WFP management structures and support systems including the following:
 - Passenger and cargo bookings will be made through appropriate management structures to ensure the dissemination of flight schedules and manifests to all locations;
 - A dedicated communication system to monitor the progress of all flights through VHF/HF radios and satellite tracking systems;
 - The web-based electronic Flight Management Application (E-FMA) that enables on-line booking requests by various agencies and monitoring of load factors, operational trends and costs;
 - Structured flight schedules (weekly and monthly) to ensure flexibility and accommodate special flights.

Project Management

11. The WFP Ethiopia Country Director (CD) will act as the Funds Manager and the WFP Ethiopia Head of Finance will serve as the Allotment Administrator.
12. The Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO) will manage the operation locally under the overall supervision of the WFP Ethiopia CD and through the Chief of the Aviation Service at WFP Headquarters in Rome. The CATO will be responsible for all operational matters including scheduling, operators' compliance, safety management, and risk management. Further, the CATO will provide operational reports to the CD, the Chief of Aviation and UGC.
13. The Aviation Service (OSLA) will be responsible for contracting of aircraft, quality assurance and normative guidance to the operation. OSLA will also provide operational and administrative support.

Project Costs

14. The total project cost for this SO is budgeted at US\$8,978,222.

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN		
SO Category	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Ethiopia	
Project Number	200711	
Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A):		
A – WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff directly involved in Operations)		\$ 137,316
B - Implementation Inputs (Operational Agreements, Communication, Vehicle leasing and maintenance)		\$ 7,549,739
Total Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A):		\$ 7,687,055
Direct Support Costs (DSC):		
A - WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff involved in Management and Administration)		\$ 523,276
B – Recurring expenses and Other WFP Costs		\$ 69,650
C – Capital Equipment Costs		\$ 17,750
D – Local Security Costs		\$ 15,119
E – Travel and Transportation Costs		\$ 78,012
Total Direct Support Costs		\$ 703,807

Total WFP Direct Project Costs	\$ 8,390,862
Indirect Support Costs (ISC - 7 percent) :	\$ 587,360
TOTAL WFP COSTS	\$ 8,978,222

15. The project resources are expected to be raised through donor contributions and nominal fees (partial cost-recovery). In accordance with a UGC decision, it is estimated that donor contributions will make up 85 percent of the budget requirements while 15 percent will be generated through nominal booking fees. Full cost-recovery will be applied to special flights.

Monitoring & Evaluation

16. Key Performance Indicators will be measured and reported at the end of the project and will include the following:

- Number of Needs Assessments carried out (target: four);
- Number of passengers transported monthly against planned;⁶
 - Passenger segments (target: 800);
 - Passengers transported (target: 640);
- Percentage of passenger bookings served (target: 95%);⁷
- Tonnage of light cargo transported monthly against planned quantities (target: two mt);
- Number of agencies using the air service (target: 35);
- Number of locations served (target: seven);
- Response to medical and security evacuations duly requested (target: 100%).

The implementation modalities of this project will be constantly reviewed and tailored to changing realities on the ground and according to the needs of the humanitarian community.

Risk Assessment & Mitigation

17. A number of risks could impact the implementation of this SO. The main risks identified are presented through three risk areas (contextual, programmatic and institutional). The subsequent narrative explains the risks and outlines mitigation measures to be taken.

18. **Contextual Risks.** Security in Ethiopia, especially in the Somali Region, is still a concern which may result in limitation of humanitarian travel. 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 hazard identification will be constantly implemented through the established WFP Aviation structure and the relevant risk analysis, and mitigation actions will be implemented as required to keep an acceptable level of risk.

19. **Programmatic Risks.** Humanitarian agencies may scale up their assistance in the country through an increase in their staff while expanding their activities to more remote areas. UNHAS will be able to meet the increase in humanitarian demands through efficient planning of flights using its current fleet. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and cargo transport, if required.

20. **Institutional Risks.** The success of the SO is conditional on adequate resources being available to WFP throughout the implementation period. Resource mobilization strategies will include steps to be

⁶ The difference between 'passenger segments' and 'passengers transported' arises from the fact that one and the same passenger might be routed through multiple segments to get to the final destination. Hence, 'passenger segments' reflects the total number of passengers transported, including transits.

⁷ This does not include unserved bookings due to flight cancellations resulting from bad weather or insecurity.

taken to address any funding shortfall. Jointly with key stakeholders, WFP will continue its advocacy efforts in order to ensure uninterrupted UNHAS operations for the humanitarian community.

Exit Strategy

21. WFP will rely on regular feedback and devise an exit strategy accordingly. However, given the current situation in Ethiopia and its neighbouring countries, it is envisaged that humanitarian interventions will continue and UNHAS operations will be required to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ 8,978,222 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director

ANNEX A

UNHAS Ethiopia Routes (as of April 2014)

