



**WFP The Republic of South Sudan (ROSS)  
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200786**

Country:	The Republic of South Sudan
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in the Republic of South Sudan
Total cost (US\$):	<b>US\$ 59,330,917</b>
Duration:	Twelve months (1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015)

## **Executive Summary**

This Special Operation (SO) is designed to continue the provision of access to the humanitarian community by air to locations within the Republic of South Sudan through a safe, reliable, effective, and efficient service during 2015.

This new SO 200786 is a continuation of SO 200634, which was implemented between 1 January and 31 December 2014, and adapts to the humanitarian context and latest operational objectives.

The WFP South Sudan Country Office will manage SO 200786, through its United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), in consultation with the Steering Committee (SC) and the User Group Committee (UGC). Through its flights, UNHAS will continue to provide the needed access for the humanitarian community to connect to main towns and to reach remote and isolated programme implementation sites through a demand-driven, customer-oriented service.

With the surge in humanitarian activities in the country, it is estimated that more than 250 organizations including United Nations (UN) agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and donor/diplomatic representatives as well as other missions contributing to the humanitarian effort will be dependent on UNHAS to access hard-to-reach locations in South Sudan.

Fleet composition and operational routes have been determined after needs assessments and consultations with relevant stakeholders. The operation will be implemented using a fleet of 15 aircraft based strategically in Juba, Rumbek, and Bor to ensure regular and reliable service to 48 destinations. Additional destinations, such as Malakal, will be opened as aircraft bases to facilitate movements to remote locations in Upper Nile and Unity states.

This SO is for the duration of 1 January to 31 December 2015 at a total budget of US\$ 59,330,917. Eighty percent of the project needs is expected to be raised through donor contributions, while 20 percent (US\$ 12 million) will be supplemented through cost recovery.

Throughout the project cycle, UNHAS will be guided by recommendations from recent reviews and needs assessments conducted. This aims at improving transparency, enhancing customer satisfaction, and increasing donor confidence.

## **Project Background**

1. The outbreak of fighting between forces loyal to the Government and the opposition elements in December 2013 provoked an unprecedented internal conflict in the young nation of South Sudan, leading to a widespread humanitarian crisis across the country. One year on, the humanitarian situation in the country remains critical, with more than 1.4 million people internally displaced and an estimated 500,000 seeking refuge in the neighbouring countries of Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda.

Continuing fighting in the Greater Upper Nile states of Jonglei, Unity, and Upper Nile continues to limit access and impede effective response such as delivery of food and other essential relief items to the affected population.

2. In addition to security constraints, the complex operating environment and poor road infrastructure severely impact on the ability of aid workers to access people affected by the conflict, making air transport the only option to reach beneficiary sites. During the rainy season, over 60 percent of the entire country, including key response locations, becomes completely cut-off, rendering the provision of humanitarian assistance extremely dependent on air services.
3. Despite some improvements in the food security situation in most parts of the country as reported by the Food Security Cluster, the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) conducted in September 2014 shows that the outlook for 2015 is of great concern, with 2.5 million people projected to be in crisis or emergency from January to March, including nearly half the population of the Greater Upper Nile States region. In spite of increasing insecurity, by November 2014, aid agencies had reached 3.5 million people of the 3.8 million targeted for the year,<sup>1</sup> and the scale of humanitarian assistance is increasing.
4. Against this backdrop, it is expected that humanitarian organizations will scale up or, at least, maintain their current activities to meet urgent needs of the affected population. Thus, the services provided by UNHAS will be essential for an effective humanitarian intervention in the country, where air transport is a necessity but the few commercial operators available fall short of international standards. Further, more than 95 percent of the airstrips in the country are unpaved and a mere one-third of airfields are accessible during the rainy season. Hence, several locations are accessible by helicopter transport only.
5. From January to November 2014, UNHAS South Sudan supported 270 humanitarian organizations with scheduled flights to 52 locations across the country on a regular basis, and transported 80,560<sup>2</sup> passengers and 1,881 mt of light humanitarian cargo (Table 1). This denotes a monthly average of 7,324 passengers and 171 mt of cargo – a significant increase from the initial projection of 5,000 passengers and 25 mt cargo monthly. During the same period, UNHAS also conducted 242 medical evacuations for humanitarian actors. Based on the recent surge in demand and aircraft capacity, UNHAS expects to transport 7,000 passengers and 150 mt of cargo monthly during 2015.

**Table 1: SUMMARY OF UNHAS ROSS ACTIVITIES**

<b>2014</b>												
<b>Month</b>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	<b>Total</b>
<b>Hours</b>	609.66	639.67	745.93	794.52	918.79	948.51	1,207.29	1,180.66	1,440.18	1,233.67	1,449.82	<b>11,168.70</b>
<b>Pax</b>	3,613	5,218	6,536	6,352	7,125	7,229	9,206	8,277	8,788	8,249	9,967	<b>80,560</b>
<b>Cargo</b>	57.18	91.57	85.21	114.71	208.63	131.97	181.68	202.91	291.56	290.23	225.29	<b>1,880.94</b>
<b>Medical Evacuations</b>	19	18	28	13	21	26	20	24	25	27	21	<b>242</b>

<sup>1</sup> UN OCHA monthly humanitarian bulletin for October, 2014

<sup>2</sup> The passenger figure reflects the total number of passengers transported, including transits. Not taking transits into account, the total number of passengers between January and November amounts to 57,268.

## Project Justification

6. In 2015, the provision of air services will be implemented through SO 200786 to facilitate access to beneficiary sites. In particular, UNHAS South Sudan is deemed necessary due to the following factors:

- a. Continuous Need For Humanitarian Assistance

As of October 2014, 1.4 million people have been forced out of their homes and 469,000 people have fled to neighbouring countries. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), it is projected that 2.5 million people will be severely food insecure between January and March 2015, and malnutrition continues to threaten the lives of tens of thousands of children. Further, the health system is severely affected by the ongoing violence which has disrupted primary health care services extensively. As of July 2014, only 41 percent of health facilities in Unity were functioning, and 57 percent in Upper Nile and 68 percent in Jonglei<sup>3</sup>. The magnitude of the humanitarian response will require a multi-sectoral approach over the next few years. Given the complexity of the emergency (operational dimension, environmental challenges, poor infrastructure, and internal conflicts), UNHAS will remain crucial in enabling humanitarian actors to reach needy populations.

- b. Access and Lack of Viable Alternatives

The prevailing insecurity and widespread incidents of armed conflict especially in the Greater Upper Nile states of Jonglei, Unity, and Upper Nile – where humanitarian response is needed most – continue to impede aid delivery to the affected population. These factors also limit the capacity of relief workers to access locations impacted by the conflict, isolating communities and people in need and rendering the provision of humanitarian assistance extremely difficult as most areas are only accessible by air. However, there are very few commercial air service providers in the country that conform to international standards. Some air transport support is offered by actors such as the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), ICRC, and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), but these services are inadequate to meet the needs of the humanitarian and donor community. UNHAS is therefore the mainstay to address the air transport needs of humanitarian actors in the country.

- c. User Confidence and Increased Demand for UNHAS Operations

The continued need of UNHAS for the implementation of humanitarian activities in South Sudan was recognized during the UGC and SC meetings in November 2014 and July 2014, respectively. It was envisaged that humanitarian activities in South Sudan will increase. The demand for the continuation of UNHAS has also been confirmed through needs assessments such as customer surveys and bilateral consultations with various users. UNHAS South Sudan intends to manage the service through a continuous monitoring approach to ensure that passenger demand, the level of customer satisfaction, effectiveness, responsiveness, and efficiency will be maintained at all times.

7. Without a viable humanitarian air operation such as UNHAS, the access required to carry out life-saving assistance across South Sudan would be severely hampered. UNHAS is a demand-driven, customer-oriented service which regularly reviews its fleet and adapts its flight schedule, with a view to optimizing resources to ensure that this critical operational service is meeting the needs of the humanitarian community.

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<sup>3</sup> South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan 2015, p. 13  
([http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/HRP%20summary\\_FINAL\\_rev%2002122014.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/HRP%20summary_FINAL_rev%2002122014.pdf))

## **Project Objectives**

8. The objectives of this Special Operation are to:
  - Provide access to remote and isolated programme implementation sites in a reliable, safe, effective, and efficient manner to NGOs, UN agencies, and donor organizations providing humanitarian assistance to beneficiaries in South Sudan;
  - Transport light relief cargo, such as medical supplies and support equipment; and
  - Provide evacuation (medical and security) capacity for the humanitarian community in South Sudan.
9. The objectives above are linked to WFP's Strategic Results Framework (2014-2017) under Strategic Objective 1: Save Lives and Protect Livelihoods in Emergencies.

## **Project Implementation**

10. WFP will manage UNHAS in South Sudan and, through its expertise, humanitarian organizations will benefit from the service. WFP South Sudan has set up a Steering Committee (SC) and a User Group Committee (UGC) composed of NGOs, UN agencies, and donor representatives in Juba. The terms of reference of the UGC are limited to administrative matters and include guidance on destinations to be served and to define air transport priorities to ensure effective planning. The SC, composed of key representations from the humanitarian organizations and donors, provides strategic guidance and feedback on the quality of service. Further, the SC is responsible for establishing administrative policies that detail eligibility of organizations, priority of passengers and cargo, and cost recovery procedures; endorses proposed strategies; and supports fundraising for the operation.
11. In addition to stakeholder consultations such as UGC and SC meetings, 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 air assets to real demands.
12. The operational fleet will consist of fifteen aircrafts; twelve fixed-wing aircraft (two DHC-8, one DHC-6, one Fokker 50, five Cessna Caravans, two Dornier 228, one six metric ton capacity Hawker, and three Mi-8T helicopters). These aircrafts will be based strategically in Juba, Rumbek, and Bor. Subject to improvement in the security situation in Upper Nile, UNHAS will reopen Malakal as one of the aircraft bases to service locations in Upper Nile and Unity states. The aircrafts will be tasked with a predesigned weekly flight schedule, but necessary flexibility will be exercised to respond effectively to both regular demands and emergencies/evacuations.
13. Further, in order to enhance operational safety, WFP Aviation ensures appropriate training for UNHAS staff and staff of WFP partners involved in air operations in the country, including host government institutions.
14. The project will implement standard WFP management structures and support systems including the following:
  - Passenger and cargo bookings will be made through UNHAS management structures, to ensure dissemination of flight schedules and manifests to all locations.
  - A dedicated communication system to monitor the progress of all flights through two-way radios and a satellite tracking system.
  - The web-based Flight Management Application (EFMA) 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

15. The WFP South Sudan Country Director will act as the Funds Manager and the UNHAS Finance Officer will be the allotment administrator and also be responsible for managing the cost recovery component of the operation.
16. The staffing structure is designed to cater for the complexity of the operation. The overall management, administration, and control of the operation are vested in the Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO), who reports administratively to the Country Director and technically to the Director of Logistics through the Chief Aviation Service in Headquarters. The CATO will be responsible for all operational matters including scheduling, operators' compliance, safety management, and risk management. Air Transport Officers manage the day-to-day activities and are based in the various operational bases as well as in other key destinations.
17. The WFP Aviation Service (OSLA) in Rome is responsible for contracting of aircraft, quality assurance, and normative guidance to the operation. OSLA will also provide operational and administrative support.
18. UNHAS will work in close collaboration with the Logistics Cluster and other stakeholders to identify logistics gaps and coordinate the interagency transport in the country.
19. The project will be supported by the WFP Aviation Safety Unit (ASU) through the Regional Aviation Safety Office in Nairobi and the Aviation Safety Focal Point in Juba. The focal point will perform field visits to assess the operational risk levels of operators and aircraft inspections to ensure the operation is conducted within acceptable limits of risk.
20. In line with the WFP Aviation Strategic plan and recommendations made by different reviews, UNHAS will:
  - Monitor its performance in terms of effectiveness and efficiencies with a value-for-money approach, using the Performance Management Tool (PMT)<sup>4</sup>, regularly reviewing its fleet of aircraft and staffing level, ensuring adequate response to demand and string for efficiencies.
  - Implement a customer-oriented service, striving for passenger comfort and meeting their travel needs with a feedback system to allow for improvements.
  - Ensure regular, adequate and continued communication with passengers, user agencies and donors.

## Project Cost & Benefits

21. The total project cost for this Special Operation is US\$ 59,330,917 as detailed in the budget below.

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN		
SO Category	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in S. Sudan	Value (USD)
Project Number	200786	

<sup>4</sup> The Performance Management Project (PMP) is currently developed by WFP Aviation Service for UNHAS operations to capture performance in a more tangible manner. The tool aims at indicating the value-for-money of various UNHAS operations across different regions by quantifying each operation's effectiveness, level of access provided and cost-efficiency.

<b>Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&amp;A):</b>	
<b>A – WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff directly involved in Operations)</b>	US\$ 4,708,394
<b>B - Implementation Inputs (Operational Agreements, Communication, Vehicle leasing and maintenance)</b>	US\$ 46,539,887
<b>Total Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&amp;A):</b>	<b>US\$ 51,248,281</b>
<b>Direct Support Costs (DSC):</b>	
<b>A - WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff involved in Management and Administration)</b>	US\$ 2,986,614
<b>B – Recurring expenses and Other WFP Costs</b>	US\$ 572,642
<b>C – Capital Equipment Costs</b>	US\$ 160,300
<b>D – Local Security Costs</b>	US\$ 208,189
<b>E – Travel and Transportation Costs</b>	US\$ 273,429
<b>Total WFP Direct Support Costs:</b>	<b>US\$ 4,201,174</b>
<b>Total WFP Direct Project Costs</b>	US\$ 55,449,456
<b>Indirect Support Costs (ISC - 7 percent) :</b>	US\$ 3,881,462
<b>TOTAL WFP COSTS</b>	<b>US\$ 59,330,917</b>

22. In addition to the resources expected to be raised through donor contributions, UNHAS will continue to charge a nominal booking fee on regular routes, and full cost recovery will be applied to dedicated charter flights as directed by the Steering Committee and outlined in the Standard Administrative and Operating Procedures. It is estimated that donor contributions will make up 80 percent of the budget requirements while 20 percent will be generated through the nominal booking fees. UNHAS South Sudan key donors have indicated a continued interest in supporting the operation in 2015.
23. The benefits envisaged for the humanitarian community under the UNHAS operation in South Sudan are as follows:
- Provision of predictable air transport services to priority destinations in order to enable humanitarian staff and donor organizations to carry out their duties in South Sudan;
  - Operational efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation and monitoring of humanitarian projects;
  - A common service consistent with the call by the UN Secretary-General for greater unity of purpose and coherence at the country level so that UN entities can benefit from one another's presence through corresponding consultative and collaborative arrangements;
  - A cost-effective service that can take advantage of economies of scale through continuous monitoring and a results-based management concept; and
  - A client-oriented common service that responds to users' needs.

Efforts will be made to contain costs and ensure value-for-money throughout the project cycle.

## Monitoring & Evaluation

24. Based on empirical data and the project's historical statistics, key performance indicators will be reported at the end of the project and will include the following:
- Number of Needs Assessments carried out (target: at least 4);
  - User Satisfaction Rate (target: 80%);
  - Number of passengers transported monthly against planned;<sup>5</sup>
    - Passenger Segments (target. 7,000)
    - Passengers Transported (target: 4,500)

<sup>5</sup> 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.

- Tonnage of light cargo transported monthly against planned (target: 150 mt);
- Percentage of passenger booking requests served against promised capacity (target: 95% service level)<sup>6</sup>;
- Percentage of cargo delivered within promised lead-time (target: 90%);
- Number of humanitarian organizations utilizing the service (target: 250 user organizations);
- Percentage response to medical and security evacuations (target: 100%); and
- Locations served (target: 40).

25. The project will be monitored regularly and reviewed as necessary to suit the prevailing operational context in the country and to serve the needs of the humanitarian community.

## **Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning**

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

27. Contextual Risks: Security in the Republic of South Sudan may remain at the current precarious level or even deteriorate, which may result in a limitation of air travel. In such a situation, UNHAS will leverage its close coordination with UNDSS to ensure timely communication of the security situation at destinations and adjust its operations accordingly. Through the WFP Aviation structure, operational hazard identification will be constantly implemented, and relevant risk analysis and mitigation actions will be adopted to maintain an acceptable level of risk.

28. Programmatic Risks: Humanitarian agencies may scale up their assistance in the country through an expansion of staff while expanding their activities to more remote areas. UNHAS will be able to meet the increase in demand for humanitarian air travel through efficient planning of flight operations using its current fleet. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and/or cargo transport, as required.

29. Institutional Risks: The success of the SO is conditional on adequate resources being available throughout the implementation period. Resource mobilization strategies will include steps to be taken to address any funding shortfalls. Jointly with the SC, WFP will continue its advocacy efforts in order to ensure uninterrupted UNHAS operations for the humanitarian community.

## **Exit Strategy**

30. WFP will rely on regular feedback and devise an exit strategy accordingly. However, in the view of the current humanitarian situation, and the lack of reliable commercial alternatives, it is envisaged that humanitarian intervention will continue in South Sudan in 2015 and UNHAS would be needed to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

This Special Operation covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015 at a total cost to WFP of **US\$ 59,330,197** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

## **APPROVAL**

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<sup>6</sup> This does not include unserved bookings due to flight cancellations resulting from bad weather or insecurity.

Ertharin Cousin  
Executive Director



Annex I: Map of Flight Routes

