



WFP South Sudan Special Operation 200791

Country:	South Sudan
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of life saving Emergency ICT services to the Humanitarian Community in South Sudan to enable them to provide assistance to the people in need.
Total cost (US\$):	\$4,474,806
Duration:	1 January to 31 December 2015 (12 months)

Executive Summary

1. In February 2014, the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) activated a Level 3 Emergency Response for South Sudan due to the conflict that broke out in December 2013 and the consequent displacement of large population groups in the three states of Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile. This has been renewed for 2015.
2. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) has been active in South Sudan since 2011, shortly after its cessation from Sudan. However, in response to the unfolding crisis of 2014, ETC scaled up its activities to provide adequate response which was significantly more demanding than in previous years. Taking into consideration the number of active UN agencies, international and national NGOs that are in need of secure voice and data connectivity, ETC plans to provide for vital life-saving ICT services to the humanitarian community to enable them to reach the affected communities.
3. The 2015 Strategic Response Plan for South Sudan identified three strategic objectives in recognition of the acute and multi-faceted needs threatening the lives of millions of people across the country.

Objective 1 – to save lives and alleviate suffering by providing multi-sector assistance
Objective 2 – to protect the rights of the most vulnerable people
Objective 3 – to improve the self-reliance and coping capacities of people in need
4. The cluster will contribute primarily to Strategic Objectives 1 and 3 of the Strategic Response Plan. Its specific objectives are to:

⇒ Deliver common emergency ICT services to enable humanitarian partners to provide life-saving assistance to populations in need;

⇒ Provide a structured and effective response to the ICT needs of the humanitarian community through the implementation of standardized tools and methodologies;

- ⇒ Leverage on existing ICT infrastructure to provide self-reliant and sustainable connectivity services at competitive cost to partners in the post conflict scenario.
- 5. The cluster will continue to provide data connectivity and telecommunications to humanitarian organizations on the ground, reinforcing its presence in the crisis affected areas with focus on the three states with the most acute needs (Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile). In addition the cluster will work in 2015 to expand its services to cover new areas identified such as the six operating centers that the humanitarian community plans to use for forward positioning of staff and resources. The cluster will also maintain and strengthen its services in the Protection of Civilian (PoC) sites and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) settlement sites.

Project Background

- 6. South Sudan is one of the most challenging operating environments in the world. The basic infrastructure is severely underdeveloped:
 - ⇒ Only 1 per cent of the population has access to electricity in South Sudan, and low levels of education also constrain opportunities for commerce and technology.
 - ⇒ Telephone infrastructure is virtually nonexistent and mobile coverage is not available in many parts of the country, including the crisis-affected states where a large number of humanitarian partners are operating which hamper their effort to respond efficiently to the crises.
- 7. To ensure safety and security of staff and enable coordination of service delivery, humanitarian actors require independent and secure voice and data connectivity that includes the provision of emergency data connectivity and enhanced security telecommunications services.

Project Justification

- 8. The ETC will provide vital data connectivity and security telecommunication services enabling humanitarian organizations to deliver life-saving services to the affected people and communities.
- 9. The Cluster will implement the infrastructure required to introduce digital radios to the humanitarian community to benefit from value-added security features available such as GPS tracking, text messaging and direct dialing with the possibility of integrating with UNMISS radio network.
- 10. The Cluster will introduce standardized systems and processes, and will setup a centralized helpdesk accessible and reachable to locations where ETC services are available. This will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the response. This will also assist to measure and further improve upon the quality of services offered to the humanitarian community.

11. To transition from basic and less-permanent data connectivity service to a more stable and permanent service, ETC will leverage existing infrastructure to provide self-reliant data connectivity services through a cost sharing modality. After six months of operations, the sites will be re-assessed to decide on whether to continue temporary services or to move to longer term solutions.

Project Objective(s)

12. This project aims at providing lifesaving emergency ICT services to the humanitarian community in South Sudan, thus enabling them to provide assistance to the people in need. The project will focus on the “operating centers¹” concept to ensure that humanitarian organizations relocated to those centers will be provided with vital data connectivity and telecommunications services. At the same time, ETC will continue to support the needs of the humanitarian community in crisis affected states.
13. While implementing the project and rolling out the services, the Cluster will take into consideration lessons learnt from previous implementations. The response to support needs will be more structured and effective through the implementation of standardized tools, systems and processes.
14. ETC will provide training on new systems being implemented such as digital radios and VSATs. It will continue to provide radio training to end users and provide technical and non-technical training to IT Staff from partner organizations while ensuring that 50% of training provided is offered to South Sudanese nationals either male or female.

Project Implementation

15. The main objectives of this Special Operation are:
 - a) Setup and provide emergency data connectivity in the Operating Centers;
 - b) Upgrade the capacity of the current radio communication network to support new digital standards;
 - c) Continue to support the humanitarian community by providing 24/7 Radio rooms in state capitals and provide radio programming and call sign allocation services;
 - d) Implement renewable energy sources to power ICT equipment in the established operating centers;
 - e) Provide training opportunities to staff on the ground to build capacity of national staff, and provide radio training to end-users;
 - f) Establish a centralized helpdesk to respond more effectively to the needs of the humanitarian partners in terms of supporting the data connectivity services.

¹ These are locations where more than one humanitarian actor operates and to which the ETC is required to provide telecommunications and IT services.

Implementation Strategy

16. The ETC, as a provider of last resort, will continue to provide data connectivity and security telecommunications services in required locations where three or more humanitarian organizations are present. The total number of staff in a location should be more than 20. In addition, the cluster will provide services to Operational Centers approved by the Inter-Cluster Working Group. ETC will provide helpdesk services in existing locations as well as new operating centers.
17. The Cluster will review the current sites in 2014 to ensure that the needs are still present. Services in locations deemed no longer required will be relocated to new identified locations, or may be migrated to a cost-share model if a longer term solution is needed or to be closed down.
18. The ETC Coordinator acts as Project Manager, while ICT Emergency Coordinator is the Funds Manager.
19. The 2015 ETC deployment plan is based on the identified needs of six new semi-permanent operating centers as well as the upkeep and maintenance of at least eight of the sites setup in 2014. In addition to the key criteria of the selection of the operating centers, ETC's intervention will be feasible and effective if the presence of the humanitarian community in such locations is for over 2 months. The estimate timeline for humanitarian organizations to become self-reliant is estimated to be within 6 months.
20. The two data connectivity kits provided by emergency.lu and Ericsson Response will continue to be utilized in 2015. The rest of the data connectivity solutions will comprise of hardware purchased locally or on sharing basis with partners such as WFP, where applicable.

Risks and mitigating measures

21. Insecurity in locations causing vandalism and loss of ETC equipment: mitigation measure is to install equipment within UNMISS premises or relatively secure locations and the use of cost efficient and mobile equipment.
22. Restricted access to sites due to insecurity or environmental factors: mitigation measures are to engage in partnerships with local service providers where possible, which will allow for further access and mobility.
23. Inadequate funding: mitigation measures are to conduct fundraising; establish rigid criteria for prioritization of locations and activities; introduce cost sharing mechanisms wherever possible;
24. Unavailability of qualified/skilled national staff: mitigation measures are to use international consultants while efforts continue to recruit and train national staff.

25. Delays in implementation of ETC projects due to procurement, importation formalities and other administrative issues such as custom clearance or licensing restrictions: Mitigation measures are to coordinate with the local authorities to prioritize ETC equipment; setup contingency stocks; and establish long term contracts with local service providers.
26. The ETC sites will be reviewed after six months. If the services are no longer required, they will either be relocated to another location where it is required or transferred to a cost recovery model if longer term solution is required

Project Cost and Benefits

27. Breakdown of Project costs

	Value US\$	% overall Budget
Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A) costs	\$3,773,588	84%
Direct Support Costs (DSC)	\$408,474	9%
Total WFP direct project costs (US\$)	\$4,182,062	93%
Indirect Support Costs (ISC) 7%	\$292,744	7%
TOTAL WFP COSTS	\$4,474,806	100%

28. The project benefits are:

- The humanitarian community including the estimated 150 UN Agencies and INGO/NGOs, will have access to data connectivity that is vital for their operations in remote areas of South Sudan, especially in the conflict-affected states. This will enable humanitarian partners to provide life-saving assistance to populations in need;
- The humanitarian community will benefit from standardization of ICT systems, processes and methodologies and will be able to provide more effective and efficient response to the affected population;
- Introducing digital radios to the humanitarian community will enable value-added security features such as GPS tracking, text messaging and direct dialing, with the possibility of integrating with UNMISS radio network for enhanced security and safety of staff;
- In post conflict scenarios, ETC will endeavor to migrate or relocate the services to a lead-agency by leveraging existing ICT infrastructure to provide self-reliant and cost-shared connectivity services at competitive cost to partners.

Monitoring & Evaluation

29. The project will implement a standard helpdesk system to track, monitor and measure the performance of the ETC staff and services. The systems, process and

tool including software will be used to monitor the performance of the project against established performance indicators.

30. ETC will monitor its activities using the following indicators and targets:

Percentage of user organizations out of all NGOs and UN agencies in South Sudan that indicate efficient and timely response of services through ETC feedback survey. Target impact is 80% users satisfied with ETC services.

Number of Operating Centers covered with emergency data connectivity and security communications (target: six centers)

Number of state capitals deployed / migrated to digital radio network (target: two);

Percentage of radios programmed vs requested in 2015. (Analogue or digital (target: 100%) ;

Helpdesk system established and operational;

Number of humanitarian ICT staff attended technical or non-technical training (target 50) of which national staff. (Target 50%);

Number of humanitarian staff trained on ETC service usage. (Target: 800 trainees).

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 01 January 2015 to 31 December 2015 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ **4,474,806** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director