



**WFP Central African Republic
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200997**

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| Country: | Central African Republic (C.A.R.) |
| Type of project: | Special Operation |
| Title: | Logistics & Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Augmentation in Central African Republic |
| Total cost (US\$): | US \$2 038 906 |
| Duration: | 08 months (01st August 2016–31st March 2017) |

Executive Summary

Since December 2013, the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic (C.A.R.) has deteriorated due to widespread sectarian conflict. The volatile socio-political situation in C.A.R. has generated additional and growing humanitarian needs, highlighted by the unrest in the capital Bangui in September 2015, which displaced almost 50,000 people in a matter of weeks.

Despite the deactivation of the Level-3 emergency in May 2015, and the largely peaceful electoral process that took place between December 2015 and February 2016, almost the entire population has been affected by the political crisis. The 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for Central African Republic notes that 50% of the population of 4.6 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. The activities in this Special Operation form an integral component of the HRP.

Limited resources, logistical capacity, infrastructure, and systematic information, require a coordinated logistics response in order to ensure effective and efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected persons. 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 C.A.R., as well as, to provide the humanitarian community with adequate logistics, ICT capabilities and enhanced coordination mechanisms to deliver relief items to affected populations.

The Special Operation has four components:

1. Enhanced logistics coordination, information management and GIS mapping to:
 - a. Avoid duplication of efforts and inter agency competition for assets and services,
 - b. To identify logistics gaps, bottlenecks and needs, and ensure that these are appropriately addressed;
2. Logistics augmentation and common services (transport and warehousing)
3. Emergency rehabilitation of key infrastructure (e.g., bridges) as identified by the humanitarian community
4. Provision of emergency telecommunications required for the humanitarian community to respond to the crisis.

The Special Operation 200997 is required for 8 months, from 01st August 2016–31st March 2017 at a total cost of US\$2 038 906.

Project Background

1. In December 2013, a surge of violence and sectarian conflict in C.A.R. triggered a humanitarian crisis, causing large scale displacement, food insecurity and disruption of already limited provision of basic services. On 11 December 2013, the IASC Principals declared the humanitarian crisis in C.A.R. a Level-3 emergency and activated a system-wide response.
2. Despite the deactivation of the Level-3 emergency in May 2015, and the largely peaceful electoral process that took place between December 2015 and February 2016, almost the entire population has been affected by the political crisis. The recent Emergency Food Security Assessment found that 50 percent of the population is food insecure; additionally, OCHA estimates that 2.35 million people out of the 4.8 million population are in need of humanitarian assistance.
3. The conflict in the Central African Republic has not only produced widespread displacement and increased humanitarian needs, but has also further damaged the already dilapidated infrastructure and all but incapacitated the transport sector.
4. In response to the onset of the crisis, WFP launched a Special Operation (SO 200605) to provide WFP and the humanitarian community with augmented logistics and emergency telecommunications support services. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster was activated in 2007, and the Logistics Cluster reactivated in August 2013, to assist the humanitarian community overcome numerous logistics and telecommunication gaps and bottlenecks, as well as, to support the humanitarian response to the crisis. SO 200605 has been subject to five budget revisions, and was extended until 30 April 2016.

Project Justification

5. Faced with these challenges, the humanitarian community has requested both Clusters to respond to the identified needs and gaps. This proposed Special Operation will address logistics challenges by augmenting logistics and emergency telecommunications capacity to support the humanitarian community.

Restricted Overland Access and Local Logistics Capacity:

6. With reference to logistics gaps, the demand from the humanitarian community is for both the provision of coordination and information management, as well as, logistical support in transportation and warehousing.
7. The Central African Republic road network is in a very poor condition and has not been maintained within the last decade. Additionally, many bridges across the country are collapsing, constituting a high risk to humanitarian operations either by preventing access to beneficiaries or by forcing long and costly deviations. Specifically, the humanitarian community identified over 40 bridges in critical need of repair during the first three months of 2016.
8. Neither the domestic nor international community's in-country commercial trucking capacity is sufficient to reach all of the affected areas and cover the needs of the entire humanitarian community. Additionally, the excessive competition for trucks, the lack of maintenance and the poor conditions of roads has increased prices and extended the delivery times of relief items. A critical need to strengthen common warehouses services was also identified.
9. The entire country relies on the MSR1 route from Douala, Cameroon, to Bangui as the primary corridor for all imported cargo, including relief items. However, travel is impeded by security incidents, as well as, congestion and extensive clearance procedures at the port of Douala. Therefore, the C.A.R. Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) report requires

updating and integration with an LCA for Cameroon with a specific focus on the Douala – Bangui supply corridor

Limited Access to ETC:

10. The humanitarian community in C.A.R. has requested WFP, as the lead of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster, for the continued provision of common emergency telecommunications support services. Both the overall effectiveness of the humanitarian response, as well as the success of any individual humanitarian activity in Bambari, Bangui, Bossangoa, Bouar, Kaga Bandoro, N'Dele, Paoua and Zemio, is dependent upon the availability of reliable data and communication services
11. Voice communication networks (land lines and mobile) are unreliable. Humanitarian workers need to subscribe on two to three mobile networks to ensure a reasonable chance of reception. In the field, communication is impossible without satellite phones and subsequently high communication costs. Private VHF and HF radio networks are the primary communication tool for security and safety needs, and an alternative for communications related to operations. Existing security telecommunications services established by the ETC need to be maintained and upgraded.
12. Data communication (Internet access) is also unstable and unreliable. Satellite networks provide most the country's internet access; this solution is expensive for individual agencies/organizations. Internet access provided by the ETC for all humanitarian workers in the common provincial UN compounds needs to be maintained and upgraded.
13. UNDSS managed communications centers have identified a gap in technical staff necessary for equipment maintenance and trouble shooting. These centers are crucial to safety and security of humanitarian personal and assets. Consequentially, UNDSS has requested ETC support.
14. The Special Operation 200997 will respond to the needs of the humanitarian community address these gaps and bottlenecks in logistics and telecommunications in support of ongoing humanitarian operations in C.A.R.

Project Objective(s)

15. Specifically, this Special Operation aims to:
 - i. Enhance the humanitarian response by providing Logistics Cluster support to the wider humanitarian community through logistics coordination, information management and GIS mapping.
 - ii. Augment logistics capacities through partial cost-recovery provision of common storage facilities and road transportation provided.
 - iii. Ensure improved access to beneficiaries through the repair of damaged bridges in collaboration with selected implementing partners.
 - iv. Provide the reliable and independent data and voice communications services that are recognized as a necessity for a successful humanitarian response.

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

Project Implementation

Component 1: Logistics coordination, information management and GIS mapping

16. Overall coordination and management of Logistics Cluster Operations in CAR is led from the Logistics Cluster Coordinator at the coordination cell established in Bangui. The Logistics Cluster will continue to provide information management and facilitate information sharing through regular logistical coordination meetings. Additionally, the

Logistics Cluster will help partners to optimize the use of resources available at regional and local levels, identifying gaps while avoiding duplications of efforts.

17. Information management and GIS mapping services will be provided, ensuring that timely and relevant logistical information can be shared with the whole humanitarian community. A dedicated Information Management (IM) Officer based in Bangui will facilitate information sharing among humanitarian organizations that are part of the Logistics Cluster, as well as, other actors.
18. One Geographical Information Service (GIS) assistant will be recruited and based in Bangui to support the humanitarian community through the production and printing of dedicated and customized logistics maps. GIS activities will also include capacity building for Logistics Cluster partners on the use of GPS and data collection in all of the main locations and where a need has been expressed by partners. Additionally, data collected will be systematically shared with the relevant local authorities.
19. A Cluster Co-Facilitator will be elected by the Logistics Cluster's partner organizations and 30% funded under this Special Operation. The post holder will participate in cluster activities and serve to strengthen accountability, partnership and inclusion of NGOs in Cluster activities in accordance with the 2016-2018 Logistics Cluster strategy.
20. A consultant will be recruited for a four-month consultancy to update the C.A.R. Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) report, and to integrate it with a LCA for Cameroon that will focus specifically on the Douala – Bangui supply corridor. The LCA is a source of information related to logistics infrastructure and services which is shared with the humanitarian community globally.

Component 2: Logistics Augmentation

21. To respond to some of the logistics challenges and bottlenecks identified by the humanitarian community, the Logistics Cluster will facilitate the provision of common road transport and storage facilities in selected provinces through implementing partners. Building on activities undertaken from December 2015, WFP, as the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, will continue to support Handicap International (HI) in:
 - The management of three temporary cargo consolidation and storage facilities (Bangui, Kaga Bandoro and Bossangoa), capacity of 320 m²;
 - The provision of road transport using WFP fleet and commercial service providers.
22. These services will be provided on a cost-recovery basis, beginning at 40% cost-recovery at the beginning of the Special Operation and moving to 100% cost-recovery by the end of the eight month SO.

Component 3: Bridge Rehabilitation

23. Among the needs identified by humanitarian organizations active in C.A.R., the rehabilitation of insecure bridges is vital to the improvement of C.A.Rs derelict transport infrastructure.
24. WFP, as the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, will select and partner with an implementing organization to:
 - Form a mobile intervention unit to assess and repair damaged infrastructure.
 - Establishing an alert system, through the Logistics Cluster can identify and prioritize infrastructure requiring assessment and rehabilitation;
 - Ensure ensure coordination and information sharing with all other actors involved in infrastructure rehabilitation activities.
25. Logistics Cluster participants, and the infrastructure assessed and rehabilitated within 30 days. The Logistics Cluster plans to support rehabilitation of 10 bridges.
26. One Civil Engineer will be recruited for a four-month consultancy to evaluate, monitor and validate infrastructure rehabilitation projects implemented by selected cooperating partners. Additionally, the Engineer will be in charge of finalizing a set of Terms of

Reference and guidelines to be followed by all implementing partners undertaking infrastructure rehabilitation activities.

Component 4: Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Support and Services

In response to multiple assessments, surveys and requests for continued and increased ETC support from the humanitarian community, the ETC Cluster will continue to provide and improve provision of ETC support services in C.A.R.

27. An ETC coordination cell will be established in Bangui and led by an ETC Coordinator to support overall coordination of the ETC operation in C.A.R. The ETC will continue to facilitate coordination of humanitarian organizations and operations. As Cluster Lead, WFP will ensure coordination meetings with all partners including UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, UNDSS, OCHA, MINUSCA while facilitating information management.
28. At the request of UNDSS, the ETC will provide security telecommunications infrastructure to UNDSS for the purposes of improving safety and security of humanitarian organizations staff and assets. Through the existing communication centers, the ETC will maintain security communications services in Bangui, Bossangoa, Bouar, Paoua, Bambari, Kaga-Bandoro, N'Délé and Zémio
29. Based on the request from the humanitarian community, the ETC will guarantee data connectivity required for operations and decision making. Internet services will be maintained in Bossangoa, Bouar, Paoua, Bambari, Kaga-Bandoro, N'Délé and Zémio.
30. The ETC will deliver comprehensive radio operators and radio users' training sessions to transfer skills to a target of 340 humanitarian workers in radio communication
31. The ETC will deploy a "remote radio room" solution to remotely manage the VHF network in provinces where there are no radio operators or where night shifts in the radio rooms are not possible due to security reasons. This is also a solution for a context where it is difficult to hire qualified personnel.
32. The ETC will deploy a digital VHF network in Bangui for the Humanitarian Country Team (heads of agencies and organizations) and identified groups of users. This will be part of the migration to digital to benefit from the various advantages of this technology for better humanitarian operations.
33. Where appropriate and feasible, ICT Management in Humanitarian Emergency training will be facilitated with government stakeholders and humanitarian responders in order to enhance interagency collaboration, emergency preparedness and response.

Project Management

34. The Country Director of the WFP C.A.R. Country Office will be the Fund Manager; the Logistics Cluster Coordinator will be the project manager for the logistics components of the SO; and the ETC Coordinator will manage the ETC component of the SO. The Country Office Head of Finance will be the Allotment Manager. Two Sub-Funded Programmes (SFP) will be created as follows:

- *Logistics augmentation* covering activities falling under components 1,2, and 3 and managed by the Logistics Cluster Coordinator.
- *Emergency Telecommunications Augmentation* covering activities falling under component 4 and managed by the ETC Coordinator.

Funding priority will be given to ongoing activities that were initiated under SO 200605.

Project Cost and Benefits

35. The total project cost for this Special Operation is USD\$2 038 906 and is expected to provide logistics and emergency telecommunications necessary to support lifesaving emergency operations in C.A.R.

36. Benefits of this project will include the following:

- Provision of logistics coordination to identify potential gaps and bottlenecks, and to maximize use of limited available resources, while minimizing duplication of efforts;
- Improved and increased information sharing within the humanitarian community, regarding infrastructure; logistics bottlenecks, customs and tax exemption regulations;
- Provision of GIS mapping products for the entire humanitarian community;
- Increased storage and local transportation capacities according to the needs of the humanitarian community;
- Increased access for humanitarian actors through the rehabilitation of identified bridges.
- Increased coordination of Emergency Telecommunications activities and support to the humanitarian community;
- Strengthened security telecommunications networks and greater safety and security of humanitarian organizations staff and assets;
- Improved data communication networks;

Monitoring & Evaluation

37. The following key performance indicators will be used to monitor the implementation of this Special Operation:

Augmented Logistics:

- Number of agencies and organizations using the coordination services of the Logistics Cluster (Target: 48)
- Coordination meeting held at national and provincial level (Target: 16)
- People trained in collecting GPS information on access (Target: 50)
- Coordination of logistics assessments (LCA) (Target: 2)
- Total storage capacity made available - 900 m²
- Weight of cargo transported (2500 MT)
- Number of bridges rehabilitated (Target: 10)

Augmented ETC:

- Number of common operational areas provided with access to data connectivity (Target: 7)
- Number of common operational areas provided with security telecommunications network (Target: 8)
- Number of humanitarian staff trained in radio communication (Target: 340)
- Number of remote radio room sites (Target: 2)
- Number of digital radio network site (Target: 1)
- Number of ICT4Gov trainings delivered (Target: 1)

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

Risk Assessment and Mitigation

38. Listed below are the identified risk to the success this SO and relevant mitigation methods:

- Sudden deterioration of the security situation in C.A.R.:
 - i. Strengthen preparedness of humanitarian partners through prepositioning of cargo and ensuring adequate storage and transport capacity is available.
- Logistics constraints (poor infrastructure, incomplete repairs, rainy season):
 - i. Ensure that adequate storage and transport capacity is available;
 - ii. Ensure that infrastructure spot repair activities are conducted before the rainy season;

- Lack of funding:
 - i. Ensure engagement with traditional C.A.R. SO donors and actively provide inputs for ongoing appeals and donor outreach materials/opportunities;
 - ii. This SO has been designed with a limited budget, prioritizing key activities which have been put forward by the humanitarian community.
 - iii. There is also an increasing cost-recovery component of this project.

Exit strategy

39. The objectives listed in the four components are expected to be completed by the project end date on 31 March 2017.
40. Where feasible, the Logistics and ETC clusters will continue to provide capacity building to humanitarian partners and local authorities as part of their long-term/handover strategy.
 - The Logistics Cluster will facilitate the delivery of technical trainings aimed at strengthening government and humanitarian capacity.
 - The Logistics Cluster will additionally support the Ministry of Infrastructure through the digitalization of maps present in its archives.
41. After the end of the project, the ETC coordination activities will be compacted into regular working groups comprising existing agencies and NGO’s to continue facilitating communication between humanitarian partners.
42. Local capacity will have been developed to the extent possible through the ETC Working Group without the need for a dedicated ETC coordinator and technical staff to remain in the country.
43. A sustainable cost sharing mechanism will be established for data and security communications required beyond the duration of this SO.
44. The provision of logistics services (transport and storage) will be on an increasing level of cost-recovery: moving from 40% cost-recovery at the outset of the project to 100% cost-recovery by the end of the SO.
45. The Logistics and ETC Clusters will ensure coordination and information sharing until cleared by the Humanitarian Country Team for deactivation.

RECOMMENDATION

46. This Special Operation covers the period from 01st August 2016–31st March 2017 at a total cost to WFP of US\$2,038,906 and is recommended for approval by the Chief of Staff, under the Executive Director’s delegated authority with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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 Jim Harvey
 Chief of Staff