



WFP The Republic of South Sudan (RoSS) SPECIAL OPERATION SO 201029

Country:	The Republic of South Sudan
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Service in the Republic of South Sudan
Total cost (US\$):	US\$58,397,512
Duration:	Twelve months (1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017)

Executive Summary

1. This new Special Operation (SO 201029) is a continuation of SO 200786, which was implemented between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2016, and adapts to the current humanitarian context. It is designed to continue the provision of air access by the humanitarian community to locations within the Republic of South Sudan through a safe, reliable, effective and efficient service during 2017.
2. This SO will be managed by the WFP Country Office in South Sudan, in consultation with the Steering Committee (SC) and the User Group Committee (UGC), to facilitate humanitarian access to 55 scheduled locations in the country. To overcome logistical constraints such as vast distances, poor road infrastructure and increasing insecurity, air transport is the only viable option to support time-critical humanitarian interventions.
3. Nearly 50 percent of the population are victims of conflict-induced humanitarian crises across South Sudan; nearly 2.4 million people, one in every five, have been forced to flee their homes since the conflict began¹. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), through this SO, will enable access to millions of people in need. Food, protection and access to health facilities are among the priority needs in South Sudan.
4. The humanitarian situation has significantly worsened in the aftermath of the July 2016 conflict in Juba, with the emergence of new hot spots across the country including previously stable regions such as the Greater Bahr el Ghazal and Greater Equatoria. It is expected that the humanitarian community will maintain and scale up its activities across the country due to the recent surge in need following the July fighting, and will continue to depend on UNHAS to access hard to reach locations.
5. The operation will be implemented with a fleet of 14 aircraft based in Juba, Rumbek, Bor and Wau. Fleet composition and operational routes have been determined based on historical trends since the beginning of the conflict, needs assessments and consultations with relevant stakeholders.
6. The SO will be implemented under the overall responsibility of WFP South Sudan within a period of 12 months, starting 1 December 2017 to 31 December 2017. Total cost for the operation is US\$ 58,397,512 as detailed in the budget. 8The project will be funded 65 percent

¹ OCHA: [2016 South Sudan Humanitarian Needs Overview](#)

through donor contributions and 35 percent through the partial cost recovery scheme. The cost recovery structure is set by the Steering Committee.

Project Background

7. Renewed conflict in South Sudan on 8 July 2016 between the Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO), barely a few months into the establishment of the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU), has damaged the temporary stability achieved and worsened the security and humanitarian situation across the country. Subsequent offensives by the Government forces in the Greater Equatoria Region, rampant killings of the civilian population in Wau in June, and the emergence of new hot spots have further worsened the conditions of the affected population.
8. The complex operating environment, underdeveloped road infrastructure and vast distances within South Sudan severely impact the ability of aid workers to reach the population affected by the conflict, making air transport the only option to access programme implementation and monitoring sites. Furthermore, seasonal rains from May to November render more than two thirds of the country inaccessible by road, making the provision of humanitarian assistance dependent on air services.
9. As of the beginning of September 2016 the IOM South Sudan humanitarian bulletin reported that nearly 2.4 million people have been displaced, including 786,100 who fled to neighbouring countries and 1.6 million who remained internally displaced. In addition, the number of persons sheltered in the UN Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites was about 190,000². Recent attacks in parts of the Greater Equatoria region and Greater Bahr El Ghazal have resulted in even greater movement of the population.
10. According to the forecast from the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) for May and July 2016, it was estimated that 4.3 million people in South Sudan are either at "crisis" or "emergency" levels of food insecurity, a significant increase from 2.8 million people in January-March.³ The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in July put that figure at 4.8 million, some 40 percent of the population, as in need of urgent food, nutrition and livelihood assistance⁴. Food and nutrition insecurity has spread to traditionally stable regions due to the conflict, depleted stocks from the last harvest, and the effects of the economic crisis which led to an inflation rate of 660 percent. With the recurring closure or limited access of key trade routes, such as the Nimule-Juba Road-supply route from Uganda, and increasing banditry on the road, food supply from neighbouring countries is projected to further decline, a situation that will worsen the food security situation.
11. Emerging hot spots such as Greater Bahr el Ghazal and Greater Equatoria require that aid organizations resume and enhance their capacity for both rapid response and static missions during the year, while maintaining current levels of activity in the Greater Upper Nile (GUN region). The Inter-Cluster Working Group (ICWG) has indicated the need for continued implementation of the Integrated Rapid Response Mechanism (IRRM), which requires deployment of aid workers from various sectors to critical locations, where permanent bases cannot be established.

² IOM South Sudan: [Humanitarian Update #69, 2 September 2016](#)

³ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification: [IPC Global Alert South Sudan, May-July 2016](#)

⁴ FAO: [South Sudan Situation Report, 6 September 2016](#)

12. From January to August 2016, UNHAS South Sudan supported 234 humanitarian organizations with regular scheduled flights to more than 55 scheduled and 12 non-scheduled destinations, and transported 49,162 passengers and 771,600 kg of light humanitarian cargo (see Table 1). During the same period, UNHAS also conducted 121 medical evacuations and 299 security relocations for humanitarian actors.

Table 1: Summary of UNHAS RoSS Activities in 2016

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Total
Hours	941.65	1045.04	1056.08	1039.19	1051.78	1159.06	552.89	916.44	7762.1
Pax	5,180	7,295	6,940	6,972	7,115	7,479	2,906	4,768	49,162
Cargo (kg)	74,600	108,300	97,700	102,600	104,700	126,00	57,600	100,300	771,600
Medevac	13	19	23	7	18	27	8	6	121
Sec. Relocation	15	71	26	20	0	5	149	13	299

Project Justification

13. Close to three years of war have turned the world's youngest nation into a complex and complicated humanitarian crisis that threatens the lives of millions of its population. The provision of air services in the country is critical for the humanitarian organizations operating in South Sudan to reach the most vulnerable in remote and isolated locations. Below is the rationale to maintain UNHAS services in the country:

a) Continuous Need for Humanitarian Assistance

Ongoing conflicts, political instability and economic hardship have led to a severe humanitarian crisis in South Sudan. About 4.3 million people have reached crisis and emergency levels of food insecurity, with a significant number categorized as catastrophic. Economic crisis, caused by dwindling oil revenue and the world's highest inflation rate of 660 percent⁵, has eliminated the purchasing power of the population. According to WFP Price Monitoring in July, prices of staple food have increased about ten times of the five year average⁶. It is estimated that 6.1 million people are currently in need of assistance, a situation that may deteriorate if displaced people are unable to return to their farms during the farming season.

b) Continued Demand

It is expected that more than 240 organizations facilitating humanitarian response in South Sudan will depend on UNHAS to reach beneficiaries in 2017. Besides supporting programme implementation, UNHAS has the capacity to relocate aid workers to safety within a short time, if required. Humanitarians, both in the frontlines and the nation's capital, have continued to face hostilities and attacks, especially after the July crisis resulting in more than 90 incidents that month alone⁷. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that since 2015, South Sudan has surpassed Afghanistan as having the highest number of reported serious attacks.⁸ The humanitarian organizations in South Sudan

⁵ [Global Emergency Overview Weekly Picks, 30 August 2016](#)

⁶ FEWS NET: [South Sudan Food Security Alert, 23 August 2016](#)

⁷ UNOCHA: [South Sudan Humanitarian Bulletin, Issue 12, 23 August 2016](#)

⁸ <http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/south-sudan-humanitarian-bulletin-issue-12-23-august-2016>

have started scenario planning for 2017 based on the current situation, with the intention to maintain, if not scale up, activities across the country due to the recent surge in need following the July fighting. UNHAS will be key to timely and effective interventions, especially to deep field locations. During the User Committee meeting held on 22 September, aid organizations re-affirmed the ongoing need for UNHAS services to reach the population affected by the conflict across the country. Humanitarian workers continue to request more flights to the Equatoria region, where the Government's attempt to clamp down break-away military factions continues to cause displacement.

c) Access and Lack of Viable Alternatives

Roads and basic infrastructure in South Sudan are rudimentary and inadequate for surface travel and the delivery of cargo. The rainy season which lasts from May to November, renders nearly 60 percent of the country inaccessible, meaning that road access to numerous areas of humanitarian intervention becomes impossible. In addition to the volatile security situation and poor condition of the logistical infrastructure, there are demographic and geographic factors affecting humanitarian assistance. With a population of approximately 12 million, over 80 percent of which lives in rural areas, spread across a vast area of 650,000 square kilometres, movement of humanitarian personnel and cargo from the major hubs to areas of operation is challenging, if not impossible without a viable air service. In addition, increasing banditry and incursion by security forces on the main trade and supply routes, such as Nimule-Juba and Rumbek-Wau-Aweil roads continue to impede movement of aid workers and humanitarian cargo even during the dry season. Moreover, 110 million square metres of land are contaminated by landmines and explosive remnants of war.⁹ As of August 2016, there are no reliable commercial aviation options in the country serving deep field locations and UNHAS remains the only common service for the entire humanitarian community. There are a few other service providers in the country such as United Nations Mission in South Sudan, ICRC, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), however, they often do not serve the wider humanitarian community.

14. 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 will remain a demand-driven, customer-oriented service and will adapt its operation to meet the air transport needs of the humanitarian community.

Project Objective(s)

15. In line with WFP's Strategic Results Framework, the objectives of the Special Operation 201029 for 2017 are as follows;
 - Provide access to remote and isolated programme implementation sites in a reliable, safe, effective and efficient manner to NGOs, UN agencies, the diplomatic community and donor representatives 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 <http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/2016-south-sudan-humanitarian-needs-overview>

Project Implementation

16. WFP will continue to manage UNHAS in South Sudan and, through its expertise, humanitarian organizations will benefit from the service. This Special Operation will be implemented in close collaboration with the Steering Committee (SC) and the User Group Committee (UGC) - drawn from NGOs, UN agencies and donor representatives in Juba- to assist UNHAS in determining requirements and priorities of air transport needs and cost recovery modalities. UGC meetings are conducted monthly and the SC convenes quarterly or when deemed necessary.
17. UNHAS will conduct passenger satisfaction and provision of access satisfaction surveys, as assessment tools, to measure its performance against the demand of the user community and receive required feedback to adapt its assets and operational planning to identified needs.
18. The operational fleet will consist of 14 air assets, 11 fixed-wing aircraft and three helicopters. These aircraft will be based strategically in Juba, Rumbek, Bor and Wau. The aircraft will be tasked using a predesigned weekly flight schedule. However, UNHAS will maintain the flexibility to respond effectively to regular demand, rapid response missions, special flights required by the humanitarian community and evacuation requests.
19. In order to enhance operational safety, WFP Aviation ensures appropriate training for UNHAS staff members and WFP partners involved in air operations in the country, including host government institutions.
20. The project will implement standard WFP management structures and support systems including the following:
 - Passenger and cargo bookings will be made through UNHAS flight management tools and 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 two-way radios and a satellite tracking system.
 - The electronic Flight Management Application (EFMA) that enables online booking requests by various organizations and monitoring of load factors, operational trends and costs.
 - Structured flight schedules (weekly and monthly) to ensure flexibility and accommodate special flights.

Project Management

21. 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.
22. 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 Common Services, Supply Chain Division 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.

23. 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.
24. UNHAS will work in close collaboration with the Logistics Cluster and other stakeholders to identify logistics gaps and coordinate the inter-agency transport in the country.
25. Support will be provided 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 the operators and aircraft inspections to ensure the operation is conducted within acceptable limits of risk.
26. UNHAS will:
 - Monitor its performances in terms of effectiveness and efficiencies with a value-for-money approach, using the Performance Management Tool (PMT), regularly reviewing its fleet and staffing level, ensuring adequate response to demand and strive for efficiency.
 - Implement a customer-oriented service, creating 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 and Benefits

27. The SO will be implemented under the overall responsibility of WFP South Sudan within a period of 12 months, starting 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017. Total cost for the operation is US\$ 58,397,512 as detailed in the budget. .

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN		
SO Category	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in South Sudan	Value (USD)
Project Number	201029	
Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A)		
A-WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff directly involved in Operations)		\$ 5,019,427
B-Implementation Inputs Operational Agreements, Communication, Vehicle leasing and maintenance		\$ 45,886,741
Total Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A)		\$ 50,906,168
Direct Support Costs (DSC)		
A-WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff involved in Management and Administration)		\$ 2,322,763
B-Recurring expenses and Other WFP Costs		\$ 520,042
C-Capital Equipment Costs		\$ 290,580
D-Local Security Costs		\$ 310,007
E-Travel and Transportation Costs		\$ 227,554
Total WFP Direct Support Costs:		\$ 3,670,947
Indirect Support Costs (ISC-7 percent):		\$ 3,820,398
TOTAL WFP COSTS		\$ 58,397,512

28. 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 65 percent of the budget requirements while 35 percent will be generated through partial cost recovery. Key donors have indicated a continued interest in supporting the operation in 2017.
29. 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 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.

WFP is committed to costs-control and to ensure-value-for-money throughout the project cycle.

Monitoring & Evaluation

30. An evidence-based end of project reports will be produced based on empirical data and the project's historical statistics. The key performance indicators below will be tracked as the basis of operational performance.
- Number of Needs Assessments carried out (target: 2);
 - User Satisfaction Rate (target: 80%);
 - Number of passengers transported monthly against planned (target: 5,500);
 - Tonnage of light cargo transported monthly against planned (target: 100 mt);
 - Percentage of passenger booking requests served against promised capacity (target: 95% service level)¹⁰;
 - Percentage of cargo delivered within promised lead-time (target: 90%);
 - Number of humanitarian organizations utilizing the service (target: 240 user organizations);
 - Percentage response to medical and security evacuations duly requested (target: 100%);
 - Locations served (target: 55).
31. This project will be constantly reviewed and adapted to the changing dynamics of the humanitarian response to meet the air transport need of the users.

¹⁰ This does not include unserved bookings due to flight cancellations resulting from bad weather or insecurity.

Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning

32. A number of risks to the implementation of the SO have been identified in three main risk areas; contextual, programmatic and institutional risks.
33. **Contextual Risks:** The security situation in the Republic of South Sudan is fragile, erratic and sometimes unpredictable. Further deterioration of the security situation may result to limitations of air travel and denial of the Flight Safety Assurance (FSA), similar to the first two weeks after the July conflict. 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.
34. **Programmatic Risks:** In response to recent conflict in South Sudan and the rising number of the population in need, humanitarian agencies may scale up their operations with a corresponding surge in staff deployment to the deep field locations. UNHAS will be able to meet the increase in demand for humanitarian air travel through efficient planning of flight operations and strengthening of the operational hubs with its current fleet. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and/or cargo transport as required subject to availability of funds.
35. **Institutional Risks:** The success of the SO will largely depend on availability of adequate resources throughout the duration of the project. 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

36. WFP constantly monitors the needs of the user community and the potentials for the emergence of reliable commercial air operators in the country as a basis for activating an exit strategy. However, in the current operational context, widespread humanitarian needs and lack of reliable commercial alternatives, it is envisaged that humanitarian interventions will continue in South Sudan in 2017 and UNHAS would be needed to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017 at a total cost to WFP of US\$58,397,512 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director

Annex A
UNHAS South Sudan Route Map

