



WFP SUDAN SPECIAL OPERATION SO 201043

Country:	Sudan
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Sudan
Total cost (US\$):	21,404,689
Duration:	Twelve months (1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017)

Executive Summary

1. This Special Operation (SO) is designed to continue the provision of safe, efficient and effective air transport services to the humanitarian community in Sudan. In 2016, close to 15 percent of the population were reported in need of humanitarian assistance, out of which the humanitarian community targeted to assist 4.6 million people¹. It is projected that the level of need will remain high in 2017. Continuing insecurity, vast distances, and poor transportation networks within the country severely limit access to the affected population. Since 2004, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) has been the main mean through which NGOs, UN agencies and the donor community travel to implement and monitor humanitarian projects.
2. Sudan hosts over 350,000 refugees and asylum seekers from nearby countries, namely Eritrea, Ethiopia, Chad, Central African Republic, Syria and Yemen; including over 220,000 South Sudanese who have sought refuge in Sudan following the outbreak of violence in South Sudan in December 2013 and renewed violence in July 2016. According to OCHA, 96,000 South Sudanese refugees arrived Sudan from January to October 2016². The new arrivals reside in White Nile State, of whom 72,000 people live in seven designated sites where there is no pre-existing infrastructure. Women and children comprise 88 per cent of the population. This new influx is anticipated to continue and the scaling up of response activities in East Darfur, where current response capacity is weak and direct access remains limited, is a priority.
3. In eastern Sudan, the presence of over 93,000 refugees and asylum seekers has put pressure on the availability of local resources. Over 78,000 refugees have lived for decades in the region's nine camps. In addition, about one thousand people continue to cross the border into eastern Sudan each month, most of them young Eritrean males. Darfur is home to 8,800 Chadian refugees residing in two camps in Central Darfur and 1,300 refugees from Central African Republic living in urban settlements around Nyala. In the meantime, ongoing assistance is necessary to support these refugees, particularly for health, education and livelihoods. Access constraints are expected to continue to impact the timeliness, quality, scale and reach of humanitarian response in 2017.
4. With a budgeted cost of US\$ 21,404,689 this Special Operation (SO) will be managed by the WFP Sudan Country Office, in coordination with the UNHAS Steering Committee (SC). The fleet will consist of five aircraft, and the SO will run from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017. The budget

¹ Sudan: Humanitarian Response Plan 2016

² UNOCHA: Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan (October 2016)

requirements will be raised through donor contributions (approximately 85 percent) and partial cost-recovery (15 percent) in the form of nominal booking fee.

5. 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 structure and support systems and regularly reviewed in accordance with standard procedures in order to minimize risks and ensure operational efficiency.

Project Background

6. Decades of conflict and influx of refugees from neighboring countries have made Sudan one of the world's most complex humanitarian operations, characterised by localised conflicts, protracted displacement and a deteriorating economic climate. The instability in conflict areas like Darfur and across South Sudan has continued leading to internal and external displacement which have negatively affected the livelihoods of millions of people. Nearly 15 percent of Sudan's population is in need of humanitarian assistance and although many of the conflicts generating these needs are protracted, vulnerabilities of affected communities remain acute.
7. In 2016, Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) estimated that 5.8 million people need assistance while only 4.6 million was targeted as a result of prioritization that addressed multi-sectoral needs, focusing predominantly on levels of vulnerability rather than status. Though the number of the population needing assistance in 2016 indicates a decrease of 800,000 people targeted compared to 2015, the needs remain high.
8. With limited infrastructure especially in Darfur, insecurity and vast distances, surface transport remains impracticable and dangerous, and limits access to beneficiaries. As a result, air transport is the only secure transport option for the humanitarian community.
9. To date, there are no reliable domestic air carriers in hard-to-reach locations in Sudan which meet the United Nations Aviation Standards (UNAVSTADS) – the minimum standards developed by the UN, in coordination with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.
10. WFP established UNHAS Sudan in 2004 in response to the Darfur Emergency and has since managed it on behalf of the humanitarian community. The interests of the humanitarian community are represented through the User Group Committee (UGC). The Terms of Reference for the UGC are limited to administrative matters and include decisions on the destinations to be served and weekly flight schedules and/or to the quality of service. In addition to the UGC, the Steering Committee (SC) was established to provide strategic guidance to UNHAS. The SC is responsible for establishing administrative policies that detail eligibility of organizations, priority of passengers and cargo, cost recovery procedures not to mention determine service management based on upcoming needs.
11. Today, there are 220 international and national humanitarian organizations in Sudan of whom 70 per cent are operational in Darfur (155 organizations). Although in recent years a number of INGOs have closed their operations in parts of Darfur due to funding or restricted operating environments, the operational capacity of humanitarian partners is closely linked to sustained and unfettered access, ability to maintain necessary staff and donor funding. Most of the organizations are local implementing partners to the 80 organizations currently using UNHAS services in the country. Between January and October 2016, UNHAS Sudan transported 18,215 passengers and 94.76 MT of cargo. It also carried out 11 medical evacuations. A detailed summary of activities is indicated in Table 1 below:

SUMMARY OF UNHAS SUDAN ACTIVITIES 2016

MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	TOTAL
HOURS	368.42	300.73	388.24	315.95	340.64	356.61	318.05	438.35	356.98	400.12	3,187.98
PAX	1386	1867	1958	1671	1939	1656	1632	2349	1741	2016	18,216
CARGO MT	4.021	8.652	14.160	6.674	8.876	15.181	6.185	12.392	7.586	11.035	94.762
MED. EVACUATIONS	1	0	1	0	8	0	0	0	1	0	11

Project Justification

12. This Special Operation is critical to the continued implementation and monitoring of ongoing humanitarian interventions in Sudan. The following are the rationale for sustained air transport service in the country:

a. Continuous Need for Humanitarian Assistance

Protracted conflict and violence in Sudan and in particular Darfur region has created a huge humanitarian emergency, resulting in displacements of people, loss of livelihoods, food insecurity, rural poverty, etc. Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile states have the highest rates of food insecurity as conflict continues to impede access to farmlands and other agricultural activities. Conflict, insecurity and additional displacements are projected to drive crisis level (IPC Phase 3), acute food insecurity between October 2016 to May 2017, particularly in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Jebel Marra. This is despite projections that above average rain fall and favorable market conditions during the year will result in good harvests and as such improved food security nationwide. Refugees from neighbouring countries co-habit with host communities, further putting pressure on already stretched local resources. In October 2016, 32,000 people returned home in Central Darfur's Um Dukhum locality. Their main needs are emergency shelter and household supplies, agricultural seeds and tools, water and sanitation services. Additional 53,000 IDPs from Jebel Marra have taken refuge in North Darfur, Sortony and Tawila localities, as well as in Kebkabiya town and Shadad camp³. UNHAS continues to be the most reliable and accessible form of transportation and delivery of humanitarian assistance to the affected population.

b. Continued Demand

Eighty out of 220 humanitarian organisations implementing a variety of multi-sectoral programmes in Sudan depend on UNHAS to monitor and implement projects especially in locations where only UNHAS has the operational capacity to reach. The 140 organisations who are not using UNHAS services are implementing partners to the user organisations whose activities are facilitated by the users. The humanitarian actors through the User Group meeting and Steering Committee meetings held on 28 September 2016 endorsed the proposed budget and re-affirmed the need to maintain the common service to ensure continuity of interventions. In addition, UNHAS conducted needs assessments, that further confirmed the need to continue the air service, particularly in the regions most affected by the conflict.

³ Sudan: Humanitarian Bulletin Sudan Issue 44 | 24-30 October 2016

c. Lack of Alternative Means of Transport

The security situation, poor infrastructure and size of Sudan render access to beneficiary sites very difficult. For example a trip from the capital, Khartoum, to West Darfur which is two hours of flight time, takes two weeks by road. The flexible and adaptable service provided by UNHAS, enables prompt humanitarian interventions in the country. To date, there are no reliable domestic air carriers in hard-to-reach locations in Sudan which meet the United Nations Aviation Standards (UNAVSTADS). The UNHAS fleet is regularly reviewed to ensure the right mix of appropriate aircraft for optimum performance to the benefit of the humanitarian community and to reach all parts of the country where humanitarian programmes are ongoing.

Project Objectives

13. The objectives of this SO are:

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

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

Project Implementation

14. On behalf of all users, WFP will manage UNHAS operations in Sudan. The air service is expected to support 80 agencies by providing regular access to at least 42 locations. In accordance with WFP's Air Transport Directive of January 2004, WFP has set up the UGC composed of I/NGOs, UN agencies, and donor representatives in Nyala (South Darfur), El Fasher (North Darfur) and El Geneina (West Darfur) to assist UNHAS in determining requirements and establish priorities in air transport needs. UGC meetings are conducted monthly at state level and the SC convenes quarterly or when deemed necessary at Khartoum level. Additionally, surveys will be launched on customer satisfaction and access provision with the aim to receive feedback from a wider audience and to tailor the use of air assets to real demands.

15. The operational fleet will consist of 5 aircraft (one 37-seater EMB-135, One 17-seater turboprop BE1900 and three 18-seater MI-8 helicopters) based in Khartoum, Nyala, El Fasher and El Geneina. The EMB-135 and BE1900 will provide "shuttle" services from Khartoum to the five Darfur state capitals and to serve ad hoc requests to Kadugli (South Kordofan) and Kasala while the helicopters will provide access to deep field locations within those states that are not accessible by road due to insecurity, poor road conditions or limited landing facilities for fixed-wing aircraft.

16. 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 system that enables on-line booking requests and the service 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

17. The Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO) will manage the operation locally under the overall supervision of the WFP Sudan Country Director and to the Director of Supply Chain Division through the Chief of Aviation at WFP Headquarters in Rome. The CATO will provide operational reports to the CD, the Chief of Aviation, and SC/UGC.
18. The WFP Sudan Country Director will act as the Funds Manager and the UNHAS Finance Officer will be the Allotment Administrator for this operation.
19. The Aviation Service (OSLA) in Rome will be responsible for contracting aircraft, quality assurance and the safety oversight of the operation. 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. This and other capacity building initiatives will be pursued under the project. OSLA will also provide operational and administrative support.
20. The project's resources are expected to be raised through donor contributions and nominal booking fees (partial cost recovery). It is estimated that donor contributions will make up 85 percent of budget needs. The nominal booking fees, comprising 15 percent of resources, will be generated through ticket sales of US\$ 200 per passenger (hub-to-hub flights) and US \$100 per passenger (hub-to-deep field flights) on the regular schedule. Full cost recovery will be applied for dedicated charter flights. This strategy is approved by the Steering Committee.

Project Cost & Benefits

21. The total project cost for this Special Operation is **US\$ 21,404,689** as detailed in the budget.

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN		
SO Category	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Sudan	Value (USD)
Project Number 201043		
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT & AUGMENTATION (CD&A):		
WFP Staff Related Costs:		
A - International Professional Staff + consultants + Int'l GS		1,011,720
B - Local Staff (NO + General Service + Temporary Assistance)		1,319,930
C - Other Staff Costs (incl.travel and allowances)		129,809
Implementation Inputs:		
A - Aircraft Costs		14,315,288
B - Travel Costs		188,403
C - Other (Incl. Rental of facilities, Utilities, Office supplies & other consumables, Communications & IT Services, equipment repairs & maintenance, vehicles running costs)		562,963
D - TC/IT Equipment Costs (data processing equipment):		26,733
E - Vehicle Leasing Costs		118,596
Total Capacity Development & Augmentation (CD&A):		17,673,442
DIRECT SUPPORT COSTS (DSC):		
WFP Staff Related Costs:		
A - International Professional Staff + consultants + Int'l GS		772,785
B - Local Staff (NO + General Service + Temporary Assistance)		981,113
C - Other Staff Costs (incl.travel and allowances)		69,338
Recurring costs:		
A - Local Security Costs		284,170
B - Travel Costs		108,570
C - Other (Incl. Rental of facilities, Utilities, Office supplies & other consumables, Communications & IT Services, equipment repairs & maintenance, vehicles running costs)		91,698
D - TC/IT Equipment Costs (data processing equipment):		23,267
Total Direct Support Costs (DSC):		2,330,941
Total WFP Direct Costs:		20,004,383
Indirect Support Costs (ISC - 7 percent) :		1,400,307
TOTAL WFP COSTS		21,404,689

22. The envisaged benefits of UNHAS operations in Sudan are as follows:

- provision of predictable access to priority destinations in order to enable humanitarian staff and donor organizations to implement and monitor their projects;
- enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and security in the implementation and monitoring of humanitarian operations;
- a common service provided to the humanitarian community which is consistent with the call by the Secretary-General “for greater unity of purpose and coherence at country level and that each United Nations entity should benefit from another’s presence through establishing corresponding consultative and collaborative arrangements”;
- enhanced air safety through a standardized, single contracting and safety surveillance system;
- a cost-effective service that can take advantage of economies of scale through direct operating cost, payload consolidation and integrated organization;
- a client-oriented common service that responds to user needs; and
- Provision of essential medical and security evacuation service to the humanitarian community in the country.

Monitoring & Evaluation

23. Key performance indicators will be reported at the end of the project and will include the following:

- Number of Needs Assessments carried out (target: 4)
- Number of passengers transported yearly against planned;⁴
 - Passenger segments (target: 33,600);
 - Passengers transported (target: 21,600)
- Tonnage of light cargo transported yearly against planned (target: 120MT)
- Percentage of passenger bookings served (target: 95%)⁵
- Response to medical and security evacuations duly requested (target: 100%)
- Number of agencies using the service (target: 80)
- Locations served (target: 42)

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

Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning

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

- a. Contextual Risks.** Security in Sudan can deteriorate further, 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 hazards identification will be implemented through established WFP Aviation

⁴ 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.

⁵ This does not include unserved bookings due to flight cancellations resulting from bad weather or insecurity.

structures and the relevant risk analysis and mitigation actions will be implemented as required to maintain an acceptable level of risk.

- b. Programmatic Risks.** Humanitarian agencies may scale up assistance in the country through an increase of their staff while expanding their activities to more remote areas. UNHAS will be able to meet the increase in humanitarian travel through efficient planning of flight operations using its current fleet. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and cargo transport, if required.
- c. Institutional Risks.** The success of the SO is conditional on adequate resources being made available to WFP 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

- 25. WFP will rely on the UGC's and the Steering Committee's regular feedback and devise an exit strategy accordingly. WFP will close its air operations in Sudan if commercial alternatives with sufficient capacity to meet the air transport needs of the humanitarian community emerge in the country. However, in view of the current complex political and security situation and the lack of reliable commercial alternatives, it is envisaged that humanitarian intervention will be required in Sudan in 2017 and UNHAS will, of necessity, be needed to complement the work of humanitarian and donor organizations.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 01 January 2017 to 31 December 2017 at a total cost to WFP of **US\$ 21,404,689** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin

Executive Director

WFP
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SUDAN

UNHAS AIR CONNECTION - October 2016

Map showing UNHAS Air Connection routes for October 2016. The map displays various states including Northern, North Kordofan, West Kordofan, South Kordofan, Khartoum, Al Gezira, Kassala, Gedaref, Senhar, Blue Nile, and Abyei Region. It also shows neighboring countries like Libya, Chad, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. Air routes are color-coded: Khartoum Air Connection (blue), El Obeid Air Connection (orange), Gertena Air Connection (brown), Nyala Air Connection (green), and El Fasher Air Connection (yellow). A legend at the bottom explains the symbols for UNHAS Main Hub, UNHAS Confirmed Destination, and the different air connections. A scale bar and north arrow are also present.

Legend:

- UNHAS Main Hub
- UNHAS Confirmed Destination
- Khartoum Air Connection
- El Obeid Air Connection
- Gertena Air Connection
- Nyala Air Connection
- El Fasher Air Connection
- State Boundaries
- International Boundary
- Nile river
- Abyei

Scale: 0 50 100 200 Kilometers

Data sources: WFP, IHH, GeoNames

The boundaries displayed are the responsibility of the user. WFP is not responsible for any errors or omissions. The use of the map is subject to the terms and conditions of the WFP Humanitarian Air Connection. For more information, please contact the WFP Humanitarian Air Connection team.