



World Food Programme

BUDGET REVISION OF SO FOR APPROVAL BY THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

5) To: Abdou Dieng	Initials	In Date	Out Date	Reason for Delay
Regional Director, RBD				
4) Through: Natasha Nadazdin	Initials	In Date	Out Date	Reason for Delay
Senior Programme Adviser, RBD				
3) Through: Jean-Pierre Leroy	Initials	In Date	Out Date	Reason for Delay
Senior Logistics Officer, RBD				
2) Through: Lydie Kouame	Initials	In Date	Out Date	Reason for Delay
Resource Management Analyst, RB				
1) From: Jean-Noël Gentile	Initials	In Date	Out Date	Reason for Delay
Country Director, Mauritania				

**Mauritania Special Operation 200803
BR No. 02**

PROJECT	Previous Budget	Revision	New Budget
CD&A (US\$)	8,408,018	1,820,726	10,228,743
DSC (US\$)	992,078	361,158	1,353,236
ISC (US\$)	658,007	152,732	810,739
Total WFP cost (US\$)	10,058,102	2,334,615	12,392,717

TYPE OF REVISION

☒ Additional DSC
 ☒ Additional CD&A
 ☒ Extension in time
 ☐ Change in project orientation ☐ Other



NATURE OF REVISION:

Budget Revision Two (BR 02) seeks to reduce the 2016 budget approved by US\$ 1,175,828 and to extend Special Operation 200803, 'Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Mauritania' in time for twelve months. Through a subsequent budget increase of **US\$2,334,615 BR 02 will** ensure the continued provision of air transport services to the humanitarian community until 31 December 2017. The original budget was approved for US\$ 5,526,975 for the period 01 January - 31 December 2015, followed by one project extension until 31 December 2016 with an additional budget of US\$ 4,531,127.

The accumulated budget from 01 January 2015 to 31 December 2017 amounts to US\$12,392,717.

The components budgeted under CD&A represent operational agreement costs, namely air contract costs, fuel (89 percent of total CD&A) and staffing, as well as travel and other costs (11 percent of the CD&A).

BACKGROUND:

1. Although security in Mauritania has remained relatively stable, the overall situation in the Sahel-Sahara region remains volatile. The country hosts over 43,000 refugees, most of whom have fled from the violence in neighboring Mali.¹ So far, the situation in Mali remains volatile thus not allowing voluntary returns of refugees. In the second half of 2016, UNCHR has observed new arrivals from Mali which reached a peak at the beginning of October with more than 300 people crossing the border into Mauritania in less than two weeks. This is a fourfold increase in comparison to the total number of new Malian refugees over the last eight months².
2. The southern strip of Mauritania is part of the Sahel and a large segment of the population relies on traditional agriculture and livestock-related activities for livelihoods. It therefore remains in a state of chronic vulnerability and prone to shocks due to the unpredictability of climatic conditions and seasonal rainfalls. A poor rainy season, with less rainfall than expected in August and September, has affected crop harvest and rice production in particular. Vulnerable households dependent on local agriculture, as well as Malian refugees, continue to face concerning levels of food insecurity. The trend analysis of the past five year data (2011-2015) covering both lean and post-harvest periods based on the Integrated Context Analysis approach coupled with field level observations collected by WFP, partners and the government, suggest that 493,000 people are considered the most vulnerable in the country and all the six southern regions³ currently targeted by the PRRO 200641 are classified as having the highest level of vulnerability.
3. Access to health structures and water, sanitation and hygiene facilities remains very limited across the country leading to a likely increase in the spread of disease⁴. This is further exacerbated by limited facilities available in refugee camps with a pressing need to replace latrines in M'bera Refugee Camp, where most Malian refugees live, in particular as they are expected to reach full storage capacity by the end of the year. In order to continue support of humanitarian projects in Mauritania, and to improve the living standards of the affected populations, NGOs and aid

¹ UNCHR Operational Update: Mauritania, 15 October 2016.

² Ibid

³ Gorgol, Guidimakha, Assaba, Tagant, Hodh el-Gharbi, Hodh ech-Chargui

⁴ OCHA Mauritania, Humanitarian Overview 30 September 2016



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agencies plan on maintaining operations throughout 2017 and will remain dependent on UNHAS services to be able to do so.

IMPLEMENTATION TO DATE:

4. As of 31 October 2016, the operation facilitated the movement of 1,751 humanitarian personnel, while enabling the timely and urgent delivery of 18.8 mt of relief cargo to some of the country's most remote regions. The operation has served 32 user organizations to date, mostly NGOs. The operation remains crucial in supporting humanitarian activities in the country as part of the 2016 – 2017 Strategic Response Plan Sahel Region.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REVISION:

5. This budget revision to continue the provision of air service in order to facilitate humanitarian staff travel to various location in Mauritania is deemed necessary due to the following factors:

- a. Continuous Need for Humanitarian Assistance

Ongoing conflicts in the region, recurring hazards such as draught and floods and economic hardship have led to a precarious humanitarian situation in Mauritania. The influx of refugees from neighboring countries, specifically Mali, along with thousands of urban refugees and asylum seekers, has further crippled Mauritania's already weak infrastructure. At present, there are 493,000 people vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition in Mauritania⁵. The ability of the humanitarian community to continue responding effectively to the challenging humanitarian situation will depend on undisrupted access to affected areas, hence the need for a reliable air service.

- b. Lack of Viable Alternatives

Distances between the main areas of humanitarian activity and organisations' bases of operation are vast with poor road conditions. Road travel is also perennially affected by seasonal weather as infrastructure is damaged during the rainy season. Approximately 95 percent of UNHAS Mauritania's passengers travel to and from Bassikounou, the closest airstrip to M'bera Refugee Camp. The camp is located close to the border with Mali and it takes three travel days to drive from the capital, Nouakchott. In addition to possible delays and growing security threats posed by acts of banditry and/or terrorism against humanitarian staff along the way, high logistical and transport costs are associated with this option. Furthermore, there are currently no commercial air service providers in the country that meet international aviation safety standards meaning that UNHAS plays a vital role in ensuring rapid access to beneficiaries.

- c. Continued Demand

The continued need of UNHAS, for the implementation of humanitarian activities in Mauritania, was recognized during three User Group Committee (UGC) meetings in January, March and May this year. The demand for the continuation of UNHAS has also been confirmed through needs assessments carried out in 2016 such as a passenger satisfaction survey held on 31 May, with another scheduled for 1 December, and bilateral consultations with important user organizations actively involved in humanitarian work in the country. The operation serves 32 user organizations, comprising of UN agencies, NGOs, donors and diplomatic missions to implement and monitor

⁵ WFP trend analysis 2016



their activities in Mauritania. In 2017, UNHAS will continue to facilitate the humanitarian community's access from Nouakchott to at least five regular destinations including Bassikounou, Nema, Kaedi, Kiffa and Aioun using the Noukchott-based Beechcraft. Other destinations will be considered based on the requests of the User Group Committee.

6. User Group Committee (UGC) and other stakeholder meetings will continue to be organized on a regular basis. In addition, UNHAS will continue to implement customer satisfaction and access provision surveys to ensure a user driven service, aligned with the needs of the humanitarian community.
7. The budget revision will enable UNHAS to continue operations in Mauritania in line with the following SO project objectives:
 - To provide United Nations agencies, NGOs, donors organizations and diplomatic missions safe, effective and efficient access to beneficiaries and project implementation sites;
 - To transport light cargo such as medical supplies, and light and high value equipment, information and communications technology equipment; and
 - To provide adequate capacity for evacuations of humanitarian staff.
8. The key performance indicators for this operation have been revised and include the following 2016/ 2017 targets:
 - Number of Needs Assessments carried out (target: 2);
 - Number of passengers transported yearly (target: 2,100);
 - Percentage of passenger bookings served (target: 95%)⁶;
 - Amount of light cargo transported yearly (target: 24,000 kg);
 - Response to medical and security evacuations duly requested (target: 100%);
 - Number of organizations using the service (target: 40);
 - Locations served (target: 6).
9. The operation will be constantly review and tailored to the changing needs of the humanitarian community.

RECOMMENDATION:

In light of the above, this budget revision for an extension in time for twelve months until 31 December 2017 with a subsequent budget decrease of **US\$2,334,615** is recommended for approval by the Regional Director, with the budget provided.

⁶ This does not include unserved bookings due to flight cancellations resulting from bad weather or insecurity

ANNEX A

UNHAS Mauritania Route Map (as 15 of October 2016)

