



# Standard Project Report 2015

## World Food Programme in Iraq, Republic of (IQ)

### Special Operation - Logistics Cluster and Emergency Telecommunications Support in Iraq

Reporting period: 1 January - 31 December 2015

Project Information	
Project Number	200746
Project Category	Single Country Special Operation
Overall Planned Beneficiaries	N/A
Planned Beneficiaries in 2015	N/A
Total Beneficiaries in 2015	N/A

Key Project Dates	
Project Approval Date	July 17, 2014
Planned Start Date	July 01, 2014
Actual Start Date	August 11, 2014
Project End Date	December 31, 2016
Financial Closure Date	N/A

Approved budget in USD	
Food and Related Costs	N/A
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	12,740,987
Direct Support Costs	1,359,544
Cash-Based Transfers and Related Costs	N/A
Indirect Support Costs	987,037
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,087,568</b>

Commodities	Metric Tonnes
Planned Commodities in 2015	0
Actual Commodities 2015	0
Total Approved Commodities	N/A

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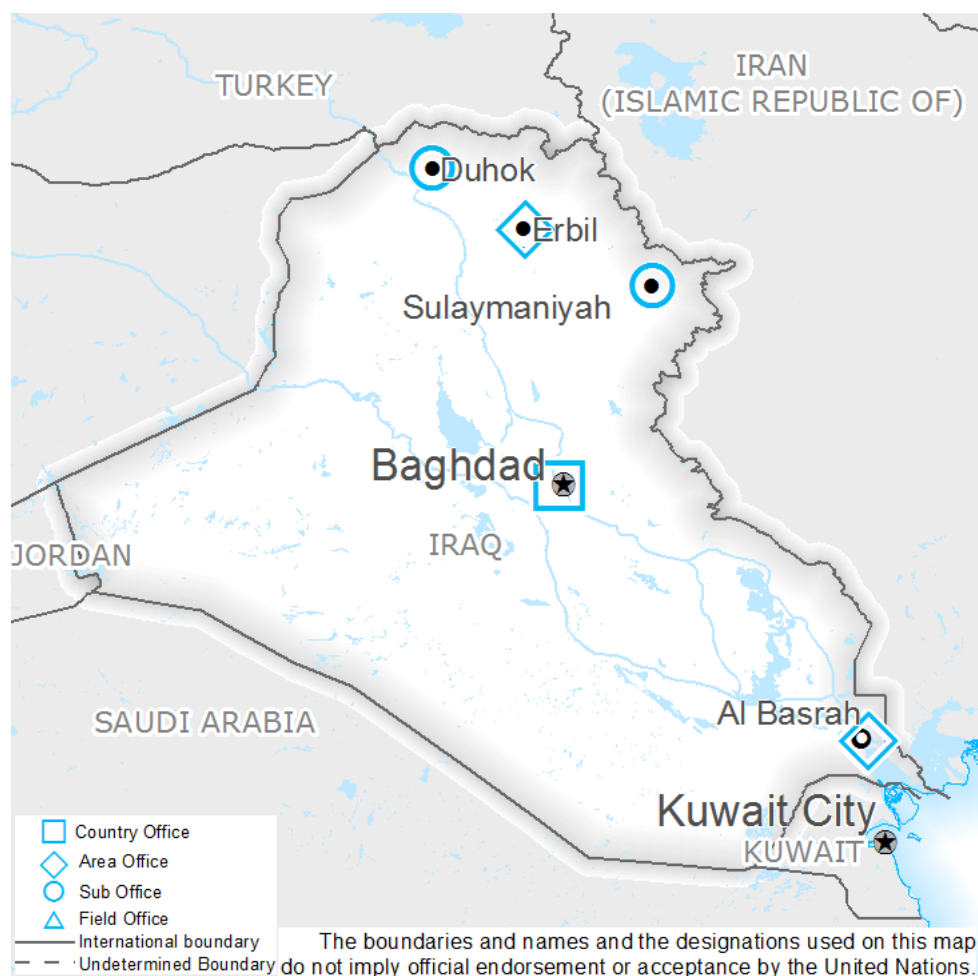
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# COUNTRY OVERVIEW



## Country Background

With a population of 34 million, Iraq is a middle-income country ranked 121 out of 188 in the 2014 UNDP Human Development Index. Despite notable development gains, recurrent bouts of political instability, conflict, and economic stressors have contributed to unprecedented levels of humanitarian need and food insecurity. The current conflict between armed groups and pro-government forces has left 3.2 million Iraqis internally displaced. According to the 2015 Humanitarian Needs Overview, 2.4 million people, including internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and other vulnerable groups, are food insecure across Iraq and forced to rely on severe and often irreversible negative coping strategies.

Iraq ranks 22 out of 50 on the 2015 Global Hunger Index at a 'serious' level of hunger. Violent conflict and protracted displacement have severely disrupted access to affordable and nutritious food, preventing many Iraqis from meeting their basic food needs. Historically, food insecurity in Iraq is a result of war and sanctions, creating obstacles to international trade, which has been aggravated by the plunge in global oil prices, upon which the government is dependent for 90 percent of its revenues. As a result, public infrastructure and social safety nets have deteriorated and access to basic social services, including food and clean water, remains a challenge for many Iraqis. Women and girls are often more adversely affected by these issues due to conservative religious, social and cultural norms and discrimination that limit their rights and their ability to participate in the public sphere. This is compounded by violent conflict threatening their safety and security. Such factors are reflected in Iraq's Gender Inequality Index value of 0.539 and ranking at 123 out of 155 countries in 2014.

Compounded by severe droughts, Iraq's ability to produce food, including wheat flour for the national Public Distribution System (PDS), has been stymied by the intensification of conflict, which has left key agricultural areas under the control of armed groups. The twin shocks of conflict and economic decline have disrupted the PDS of basic food entitlements, upon which the poorest Iraqis relied for over half of their energy intake. The PDS is currently implemented sporadically and irregularly: not all commodities are distributed each month and not all IDPs are able to access the PDS in their current location.

Iraq has made progress toward achieving some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) including MDG 1, eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. There is still much work to be done in a number of crucial areas including MDG 2, achieving universal primary education. In 2013, 95 percent of children were completing primary education, although this has decreased due to the current conflict. Alongside the government, WFP worked toward the achievement of MDG 2, through support to school feeding.

## Summary Of WFP Assistance

WFP provided support to Iraq populations and its complex challenges through three projects. Launched in April 2014 to assist an initial 240,000 displaced people from Anbar governorate, Emergency Operation (EMOP) 200677 was rapidly expanded through Budget Revision (BR) 4 to provide emergency assistance to the growing needs of 2.2 million food insecure people. Working across all 18 governorates of Iraq, WFP addressed the urgent food needs of Iraqis affected by the conflict through monthly entitlements of Family Food Parcels and cash-based transfers using a voucher modality. Designed as a nimble approach to overcome access constraints and gaps in humanitarian presence, the inter-agency Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) allowed WFP to reach people on the move with three-day Immediate Response Rations (IRRs). WFP strengthened its support and technical assistance to the government to assist with the resumption of the PDS. As co-lead of the Food Security Cluster, alongside FAO, WFP coordinated the responses of humanitarian actors on the ground who were engaged in the provision of food assistance to avoid duplication of efforts and minimise gaps.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) 200035 provided support to vulnerable groups, aimed to improve social protection and food security for vulnerable households affected by the instability. Through the provision of technical support and strategic guidance to the government, WFP planned to provide technical assistance to strengthen the government's capacity to plan, design and implement effective social safety net programmes. The school feeding programme, previously suspended in January 2014, was piloted in Thi Qar governorate in early 2015, reaching over 20,000 students in 72 schools across the governorate.

Through the Regional EMOP 200433, launched in July 2012, WFP responded to the food security needs of vulnerable Syrian refugees in Iraq through monthly food assistance and cash-based transfers. WFP assisted over 100,000 Syrian refugees in nine camps in Iraq, reducing the total beneficiaries to 60,000 in August following a comprehensive vulnerability assesment.

Through Special Operation 200746, WFP provided the humanitarian community with a coordinated logistics response and improved emergency telecommunications capabilities. These common services helped to ensure efficient and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	136,974	136,637	273,611
Children (5-18 years)	374,976	334,241	709,217
Adults (18 years plus)	496,945	483,324	980,269
<b>Total number of beneficiaries in 2015</b>	<b>1,008,895</b>	<b>954,202</b>	<b>1,963,097</b>

Distribution (mt)						
Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Single Country EMOP	4,911	509	1,285	40	22,470	29,215
Single Country PRRO	0	0	0	0	449	449
<b>Total Food Distributed in 2015</b>	<b>4,911</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>1,285</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>22,919</b>	<b>29,664</b>

# OPERATIONAL SPR

## Operational Objectives and Relevance

The ongoing conflict between armed groups and government forces in Iraq has resulted in restricted access to affected areas and populations, and hampered the ability of the humanitarian community to adequately respond to the crisis. Launched in July 2014, in line with WFP Strategic Objective 1, Special Operation 200476 was established to enhance humanitarian personnel's access to and communication with affected populations, and ensure operational continuity for the humanitarian community in Iraq.

In its capacity as lead agency for the Logistics Cluster and the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), WFP provided a range of specialised logistics and telecommunications services to continue responding to the increased needs of conflict-affected people in Iraq. The main objectives of the Logistics Cluster were to provide coordination, information management/geographical information system (GIS) mapping, logistics services (which include storage), and transportation. The ETC objectives were to provide telecommunications, including data and voice connectivity.

The objectives and scope of the Logistics Cluster and ETC were further defined and extended in July 2015 with Budget Revision 3 for the Special Operation, which aligned its strategy and activities to the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). There was a budgetary increase to cover operational requirements and equipment. Budget Revision 4 took place in November 2015 in order to align with the HRP for 2016.

By assisting the humanitarian community in ensuring the delivery of emergency assistance, the strategy of this operation was designed in line with the 2014-15 Strategic Response Plan and the 2015 HRP. The operation was extended in January 2015 in accordance with the challenging operational environment and the deteriorating crisis situation.

## Results

### Story Worth Telling

Years of fighting across many parts of the country has steadily weakened access and logistics capacity for humanitarian actors in Iraq. In order to reach those in need in the most hard-to-reach areas, the WFP-led Logistics Cluster worked tirelessly throughout the year to maximise coordination with partners who provide assistance to families displaced following widespread fighting in their hometowns.

In June 2015, the Logistics Cluster transported and provided storage in Erbil for 4,000 donated relief items, including tents, kerosene stoves, and hygiene kits, equivalent to 86 mt to humanitarian actors in Iraq, thereby supporting their efforts to address the worsening humanitarian crisis.

After several rounds of consultations with other clusters to identify priority needs, a total of 10 local and international organisations in the field received relief items for distribution by August 2015. Relief items were distributed to refugee and IDP populations across Iraq, namely Ramadi, Mosul, Kirkuk and Dohuk, where humanitarian conditions remain challenging due to the extremely volatile situation. Conflict-affected Iraqis welcomed these supplies as a sign of hope for a better future.

Saeed, a 65-year-old living in Sinjar, was one of those who benefited from this activity. Now living in an IDP camp, Saeed received two much-needed tents for his large family. After receiving this assistance through the local Rise Foundation, Saeed said, "I'm starting to feel like there is hope in life, after seeing my family living in a better place."

### Outputs

In 2015, WFP remained the lead agency for the coordination of the Logistics Cluster and ETC, providing support to the humanitarian community's ability to reach people in need across the country and save lives. As well as dedicated service provision in the areas of logistics and telecommunications, both clusters strengthened coordination and information management across the country to reinforce the capacity of humanitarian partners to identify needs and gaps. A funding shortfall between March and August 2015 affected the ability of the operation to expand its activities; after August 2015, funding was adequate.

Through its presence in three strategic hubs, namely Erbil, Duhok and Baghdad, and its role in facilitating inter-agency humanitarian convoys and airlifts, the Logistics Cluster achieved its major targets; expanding its storage facilities in Erbil and Dohuk, as well as establishing a logistics hub in Baghdad. This provided vital support as the level of assistance required impacted partners' ability to maintain necessary emergency capacity for scale-up, pre-positioning, and contingency measures. Although Iraq's logistics and transport markets are well developed, partners required updated information and mapping to enable informed decision-making. To build the capacity of humanitarian actors, the Logistics Cluster provided trainings and workshops for international and national staff logistics, including warehousing and commodities management, in order to ensure operational success for partners. The Logistics Cluster also led training for Global Positioning System/road assessments in Dohuk and Erbil. Some 34 organisations used services provided by the Logistics Cluster, including the three strategic hubs, where a total of 19,000 square metres of storage space was made available which was considerably more than planned. Mobile storage units (MSUs) were made available, with usage based on requests.

The Logistics Cluster enhanced coordination and information sharing among the humanitarian agencies. The planned numbers of regular Logistics Cluster meetings were held with representatives from multiple partner organisations, in addition to the establishment of an online meeting group, used by 90 partners, was also vital for partners in the field. To identify and address gaps in the logistics response, the Logistics Cluster continued its timely provision of information products including bulletins, maps and road assessments, all made available online. From September 2015, the Logistics Cluster team was involved in the planning and coordination of a large donation of a non-food items shipment (29,000 cubic metres, equivalent to USD 75 million) of relief commodities. This was allocated to IOM, UNICEF, and UNFPA for distribution around the country. Consignments started to be received in mid-November in Erbil and Baghdad, where the Logistics Cluster was responsible for receipt, storage and dispatch.

Key ETC achievements in 2015 included the maintenance and expansion of radio services to United Nations agencies and NGOs across the country. This included training and the deployment of radio operators to the inter-agency radio room in Erbil, as well as support to the inter-agency radio rooms in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Dohuk in coordination with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), UNHCR, and the United Nations Department of Safety and Security. In addition, the ETC conducted advanced technical training for 14 radio operators in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Duhok. The inter-agency radio rooms in Dohuk, and Sulaymaniyah were established by the ETC in late 2014. In addition to this, UNAMI extended the use of its security telecommunications radio network to United Nations agencies operating in Baghdad, Basra and Kirkuk. The ongoing cooperation between the ETC and UNAMI was key to ensure that services were deployed where needed and that duplication of services was avoided. Focusing on building capacity for local information and communications technology (ICT) staff, the ETC delivered an advanced training course on digital radio communication technology in Erbil to participants from a variety of United Nations agencies and NGOs.

Both clusters regularly produced and disseminated a variety of information products, including maps, situation reports and meeting minutes, available on a range of easily accessible communications platforms for the entire humanitarian community. Finally, the ETC provided Internet data services to humanitarian responders working at Arbat and Domiz camps, pre-positioned equipment in Erbil to extend the coverage of data services into 2016 and maintained consistency in partners' humanitarian response.

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
<b>SO1: Special Operation (Air Ops) and Special Operation (Logistics)</b>				
Number of requests for air transportation (cargo) fulfilled	instance	0	1	-
<b>SO1: Special Operation (ICT)</b>				
Number of Standard Operating Procedures developed and implemented	SOP	3	1	33.3
Number of UN agency and NGO staff trained	individual	300	412	137.3
Number of assessments/surveys conducted	assessment	5	5	100.0
Number of common radio frequency licences made available	license	8	0	0
Number of operational areas covered by common security telecommunication network	operational area	8	6	75.0

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
Number of operational areas covered by data communications services	operational area	8	2	25.0
Number of partners using data services	partner	35	79	225.7
Number of radio-rooms (COMCEN) established	radio room	3	3	100.0
<b>SO1: Special Operation (Logistics)</b>				
Number of Logistics Capacity Assessments developed or updated	assessment	1	1	100.0
Number of UN agency and NGO staff trained	individual	25	75	300.0
Number of agencies and organizations using coordination and logistics services	agency/organization	20	34	170.0
Number of agencies and organizations using storage facilities	agency/organization	10	15	150.0
Number of assessments/surveys conducted	assessment	2	2	100.0
Number of bulletins, maps and other logistics information produced and shared	item	10	22	220.0
Number of cluster coordination meetings conducted	instance	12	20	166.7
Number of hubs established	hub	3	3	100.0
Number of mobile storage tents/units made available	unit	6	4	66.7
Percentage of logistics service requests fulfilled	%	100	100	100.0
Total storage space made available (m2)	unit	4,500	18,990	422.0

## Outcomes

The implementation of this operation ensured WFP was able to provide secure and predictable assistance to the humanitarian community and support the effective and uninterrupted delivery of the emergency response. This enabled the Logistics Cluster and ETC to indirectly assist a range of beneficiaries in Iraq; IDPs, returnees, Syrian refugees and host communities. Overall, both logistics and telecommunications services significantly increased the ability of the humanitarian community to organise and support life-saving relief operations to reach vulnerable populations in a more effective and timely manner.

The objectives and scope of the Logistics Cluster and ETC were further defined and extended in July 2015 with BR 3 for the Special Operation, which aligned its strategy and activities to the HRP, and a budgetary increase to cover operational requirements and equipment.

The Logistics Cluster supported all requests for temporary storage and emergency transportation, including the facilitation of convoys and an emergency airlift in support of the winterisation campaign with tents and winter kits on behalf of the IOM. Through Duhok and Erbil, and in the central and southern areas from the Baghdad hub, the Logistics Cluster made available emergency storage capacity alongside MSUs in support of emergency pre-positioning and contingency operations, including to the inter-agency Rapid Response Mechanism. Throughout the year, the Logistics Cluster shared key information related to partners' operational priorities and bottlenecks, including customs clearance processes and infrastructure assessments, and conducted regular coordination meetings in its active hubs, as well as organised training activities on warehousing, commodities managements and road assessments in support of partners' capacity building efforts. The Logistics Capacity Assessment was updated in February/March 2015 with the latest information on the Iraq logistics infrastructure.



Through its activities in 2015, the ETC remained active in leading inter-agency coordination, providing common services and upgrading the security telecommunications system in Iraq, including supporting three inter-agency radio rooms. The expansion of radio services across the country, including increasing local capacity and expertise through delivering training and deploying radio room operators in inter-agency radio rooms, ensured the safety of responders on the ground. The ETC has programmed more than 500 radios for the response community since the operation began, meaning responders were able to communicate and stay safe throughout the duration of the operation. The provision of Internet connectivity at two sites, Arbat and Domiz camps, enabled the response community to work more quickly and efficiently. Scheduling regular Local ETC Working Group meetings strengthened coordination efforts and ensured critical services were deployed where they were most needed, avoiding the duplication of efforts.

For both Clusters, effective coordination and information management was crucial to ensure the best use of increasingly scarce resources and to better address needs and gaps in line with available resources, capacity and operational constraints. Through regular coordination meetings and the presence of dedicated Cluster Coordinators, WFP was able to reinforce the humanitarian network for logistics and telecommunications, and provide trainings to NGO and United Nations agency staff.

## ***Sustainability, Capacity Development and Handover***

For the Logistics Cluster the provision of warehouse and GPS/road assessment training supported the capacity of the 28 national and international NGOs that participated. Due to the security situation in the southern and central governorates, capacity development remains a challenge. The introduction of an online forum for logistics partners has assisted coordination and information sharing in hard-to-reach areas. When partner organizations conclude that the Logistics Cluster is no longer required, the transition phase will transfer existing assets to partner agencies that have a continuing presence serving the humanitarian community in Iraq.

The ETC focused on capacity building of local ICT staff by offering a 5-day 'Let's Comm Digital' training course in Erbil in which both United Nations agencies and NGOs participated. Throughout the year, the ETC supported United Nations agencies and NGOs by programming radios on behalf of their agencies and running radio training for basic users.

## **Management**

### ***Partnerships***

Partnerships were integral to WFP in this operation, providing reliable augmentation of logistics and telecommunication services to the humanitarian community. Contributions from donors enabled the clusters to remain operational in 2015 and, in some instances, exceed targets.

The Logistics Cluster supported United Nations agencies, including International Organisation for Migration (IOM), UNICEF, and UNFPA, and NGOs with storage in the three key logistics hubs. United Nations agencies and NGOs were assisted via meetings, online forums, and general coordination.

Partners who worked with the ETC to provide services included private sector partners, United Nations agencies, and NGOs. Ericsson Response, a longstanding private partner of the ETC, provided technology solutions to allow the establishment of Internet data services in Arbat and Domiz camps. As the lead agency of the ETC, WFP benefitted from inter-agency collaboration with UNAMI, UNHCR, and UNDSS to deliver shared services, and to identify gaps where ETC support was required. Users of ETC services hailed from multiple United Nations agencies and NGOs working in Iraq, and the ETC radio network in Iraq remained available to all United Nations agencies and NGOs in the field.

Both clusters benefited from personnel support from the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, who sent a telecommunications specialist on a four-month mission to support the ETC, and a GIS mapping specialist to support information management for the Logistics Cluster for nine months.

### ***Lessons Learned***

The key challenges for WFP in this operation were linked to the volatile security situation, which required a degree of flexibility in planning and implementing cluster assistance. Related to this, there was a need for increased



coordination, communication, and engagement with national stakeholders, in particular for accessing populations in hard-to-reach areas. The existing capacity of skilled logistics and telecommunications personnel was seen as insufficient due to significant staff turnover, expansion of operations, and the complex humanitarian context. For the Logistics Cluster, efforts to mitigate these challenges included decreasing staff turnover. This has already commenced and for 2016 staffing is stable and longer term. Strong coordination is already in place with regular meetings in the three logistics hubs and the online forum for discussion. Further trainings are planned as requested or required by agencies and a key activity is to further engage with national NGOs, particularly for the difficult to access areas.

The main lesson learned by the Logistics Cluster was the importance of strong coordination and the presence of cluster members in all operational areas. The volatile security environment and the resulting access constraints hampered humanitarian actors' ability to maintain an active presence in all affected governorates. Restricted movement of humanitarian personnel and cargo in key operational locations, coupled with high transportation costs for hard-to-reach areas, limited partners' capacity to fully respond and implement planned activities. The development of an online coordination group allowed the Logistics Cluster to contact and coordinate with partners in areas inaccessible to WFP. To enhance cooperation with other actors, the Logistics Cluster will continue its support of humanitarian partners with logistics training. This will facilitate increased operational efficiency and capacity in 2016.

Key lessons learned by the ETC included the need for strengthened coordination beyond the current areas of operation, which in 2015 largely focused on the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. In 2016, the ETC will look to liaise more closely with agencies in Baghdad, including OCHA, to increase its participation in joint assessment missions. In addition, the ETC is exploring the possibility of having a permanent ETC staff presence based in Baghdad. Both actions will help the ETC to provide services to the humanitarian community in more affected areas within the constraints of the volatile environment.

In order to continue assisting the humanitarian community to respond to the needs of conflict-affected populations in Iraq, the operation was extended into 2016.