



# World Food Programme

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## **A Report from the Office of Evaluation**



*Full Report of the Evaluation of WFP's  
Special Operations*

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## Acknowledgement

This document was prepared by the evaluation team leader and was based on the mission's work in the field (in five African countries) and a Headquarters review of documentation, as well as interviews with key informants. On behalf of his team colleague and himself, the author wishes to extend thanks to all those who facilitated the team's work in the field and in Headquarters.

The WFP Office of Evaluation (OEDE) commissioned the evaluation. The initial OEDE evaluation manager was Ms. Maha Ahmed. Two months after completion of the mission's work, report management was taken over by the Chief Evaluation Officer, Julian Lefevre, as Ms. Ahmed was transferred to a Country Office.

While independent consultants performed the evaluation under the overall guidance of OEDE, the present report reflects solely the views of the independent consultants. Publication of this document does not imply endorsement by WFP of the opinions expressed.

## Mission Composition

- Mr. Carlo de Hennin, Team Leader, ITAD consultant.
- Mr. Nils Enqvist, Logistics consultant (former WFP Senior Logistics Officer).



# Acronyms

CFA	Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes
CO	Country Office
DOC	Direct Operational Costs
DSC	Direct Support Costs
EMOP	Emergency Operation
FFW	Food for work
IRA	Immediate Response Account
LTSH	Land-side transport, storage and handling
JLOC	Joint Logistics Coordination Unit
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFI	Non-food items
OEDE	Office of Evaluation
OT	Transport and Logistics Division
OTL	Logistics Service
PDM	Programme Design Manual
PRC	Programme Review Committee
PRRO	Protracted relief and rehabilitation operation
ROI	Return over investment
SO	Special Operation
SPRS	Standard Project Report
TORs	Terms of reference
WINGS	WFP information network and global system



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## Executive Summary

1. Special Operations (SOs) were acknowledged as a separate WFP programme category by executive decision in 1996, following discussions at the 40<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA), the former name for WFP's governing body, in late 1995. One of the reasons for this decision was to address donors' funding concerns. Many donors were said to favour the funding of additional logistics costs through separate special operations rather than through an increase in land-side transport, storage and handling costs (LTSH). Better donor funding, however, did not always materialize as expected. A review of Special Operations, commissioned by the Logistics Service – OTL, is to address this issue of resources in early 2002, as part of its terms of reference.

2. A large part of the SOs proved to be infrastructure works directly related to WFP's first priority, which is to deliver food in time to beneficiaries. Logistics difficulties occurring in the performance of food operations are not new, and WFP has extensive experience in dealing with such logistics bottlenecks. The ability of WFP field staff to identify logistics bottlenecks and to deal with them, as well as headquarters' successful backing of their field staff, has been a major factor in WFP becoming the lead UN agency in transport and logistics.

3. WFP's successes have triggered a tendency to develop logistics services, not only related to food transport but also related to all aspects of humanitarian operations, into full-fledged operations for the benefit of all. Sometimes SOs are only nominally related to an underlying emergency operation or protracted relief and rehabilitation operation (EMOP or PRRO), and sometimes result in infrastructure development projects or in multi-modal inter-agency service providing. Whereas SOs are, in essence, meant to be short-term, complementary and exceptional, some became longer-term operations existing by themselves or for the benefit of other humanitarian operators.

4. However, the mission felt that a number of SOs are and remain a foreseeable logistics component of an EMOP or PRRO and should remain part of the relief operation and not become separate SOs. Many of the logistics bottlenecks that were the reason for special operations could have been foreseen already at the start of the underlying EMOP or PRRO. On other occasions contingency planning should have been included in logistics plans. Advanced planning and accurate, detailed, assessment of logistics requirements and constraints could probably have avoided some SOs. Regularly, technically qualified assessments would have been of help. On some occasions assessment was not always correct. Especially on roadwork projects, the decision criteria should remain the necessity and sufficiency, and not the opportunity and usefulness.

5. The evaluation mission recommends that only two kinds of special operations remain:

- *infrastructure operations* for unforeseeable logistics obstacles and for large-scale infrastructure works;
- *inter-agency co-ordination operations* (air services, telecommunications, joint logistics management or co-ordination services).



6. Multifaceted operations should not be continued. Multifaceted operations sometimes become needlessly complex and complicated, requiring different expertise, different cost-calculation methods and different complex management. Donors may have difficulties with one of the components of a multifaceted operation and reduce or refuse funding accordingly. It was advocated that multifaceted operations allowed more flexibility in the cross-allocation of funds. Such flexibility may go against the donors' intentions and would not compensate for management complexity.

7. SOs were a spontaneous phenomenon, initiated by OT. Rules, regulations, systems and policies came after the fact. The absence of operational procedures and guidelines is a major shortcoming and should be addressed with priority. Operational procedures should be more normative. It was observed that the introduction of some procedures, like submitting the proposal to the internal WFP project review committee (PRC) and creating a standard reporting format, has already led to some improvements.

8. Whatever weaknesses were found, it should be stressed that a larger part of the activities undertaken by the evaluated operations proved to be justified, well implemented and effective.

9. Dedicated and competent field staff were definitely one of the major factors ensuring the operations' success.

10. A recurrent phenomenon observed was an overestimate of the operation's budget. On several occasions, operations received less than 50 % of their estimated budget, but could be completed anyhow. Consequently, the shortfall in funding, as presented by WFP, should be considered as a theoretical shortfall between requested funds and obtained contributions, but not between actually used funds and really required funds.

11. It was also reported that budget control had not always been optimal, resulting in funds being not spent, wrongly earmarked or overspent. The new SAP/WINGS system should make such budget errors a remain of the past. However, the absence of transit accounts between the former system and the SAP/WINGS may result in past errors being migrated towards the new system.

12. Based upon the scarcity of documents remitted to the evaluation mission during the desk study, it seemed that the documentary cover of operations' progress at headquarters level remained insufficient. Reading of operations files in the field, however, revealed, almost everywhere, regular progress reporting. It was also stated that donor reporting and communicating was regularly assured in the field, while it was mentioned during Headquarters desk study interviews that reporting to donors had been only upon demand. Only fairly recently has reporting to donors been regularised, as part of a system-wide process of donor reporting – i.e. the Standard Project Reports (SPR), which are prepared annually and are currently the agreed reporting obligation to donors.<sup>1</sup>

13. Documentary coverage was not systematically assured in matters of changing strategy, changes in objectives or major changes in approach, thus sometimes resulting in contradictions between the operational proposal and the implementing contracts.

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<sup>1</sup> A Standard Project Report (SPR) gives an overview of an operation, setting out its objectives, its mode of implementation, the resources used for implementation, and the results which have been achieved. It should also show in detail how each donor's contribution has been used. Since a Standard Project Report reveals both the outcome (and, possibly, impact) of food aid and any implementation problems, it can be used as both a management and resourcing tool.



14. Several operation proposals could and should have been better worded, more precisely calculated and, certainly, more to the point. On several occasions, need assessments and evaluations of constraints could have been more precise and complete.

15. Modern means of communication and illustration should be used, allowing for digital pictures and maps. The creation of web pages per operation, fully illustrated and regularly updated, would facilitate reporting, improve visualised presentation to donors, so triggering higher donor interest while avoiding dry post-factum reporting.

16. It was repeated several times during the desk study that cost-effectiveness calculation was not considered a priority by the field and was sometimes lacking. It was, however, found that cost-effectiveness – where possible – was more regularly calculated in the field than was evident during the HQ desk study. But it remains a fact that cost-effectiveness was not always sufficiently performed nor highlighted in reports. Neither were the benefits generated by the operations beyond their initial scope as logistics components.

17. On several occasions important delays were noted between the moment the operation was considered or found to be necessary and the actual response. Some delays were due to bureaucracy. Others were due to delayed contributions. Considering the urgency of most of the SOs, administrative fast tracks should be established, and the swift access to funds guaranteed, pending the arrival of contributions or, as the case may be, covering insufficient funding from a reserve fund, such as the Immediate Response Account (IRA).



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Special Operations were launched pragmatically by WFP's Transport and Logistics Division (OT) in support of EMOPs and PRROs. The operations were meant to address specific logistical bottlenecks hindering a smooth and effective flow of relief food.

In 1996, SOs became an official separate programme category, with expenditures growing from eighteen million dollars a year to thirty four million dollars per year. Funding of special operations, however, saw a decrease, with only twenty-two million dollars being obtained in the year 2000 versus a stated requirement of some ninety million dollars.

Until the present exercise, no formal evaluation had been carried out to assess SOs as a programme category, to verify their performances and their results. OT requested the WFP Office of Evaluation (OEDE) to manage such an evaluation.

The evaluation was awarded jointly to the English Company, ITAD Ltd. and to a retired WFP staff member, Nils Enqvist. ITAD entrusted one of its consultants, Carlo de Hennin, with the mission.

The evaluation started on April 23, 2001 and lasted until July 3, 2001, at which date the draft of the final report was submitted to WFP. The agenda of the mission is detailed in annex II.

The evaluation comprised a desk study that took two weeks, followed by a week of consultations, revision of preliminary findings and preparation of case studies, which then took place in the field during 3 weeks.

The evaluation faced a slow start. Both consultants were confronted with the fact that a greater part of WFP Headquarters logistics staff were absent from HQ during their first week in Rome, due to there being a regional logistics conference in Cairo. Files with key documents on ongoing SOs had been prepared for the consultants' perusal. The contents of these files were insufficient to conduct a valid desk study. Additional documents were submitted, but key interviews could only start some days later.

In an interim briefing session<sup>2</sup> with the Directors of OT and of OEDE, the consultants explained the constraints they faced, reported on their intermediate findings, suggested a change in the methodology<sup>3</sup>, and submitted a choice list for field studies. Proposed case study countries included Ethiopia, Djibouti, southern Sudan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Rwanda, Kosovo, East Timor and Mozambique. However, Rwanda, Kosovo and East Timor were not chosen for various reasons. Liberia and Sierra Leone, initially selected, had to be abandoned, as no security clearance could be obtained. Consequently, the choice of Ethiopia, Djibouti, southern Sudan, Kenya and Mozambique was finally decided upon.

In accordance with the terms of reference (TORs), both consultants jointly assessed operations in Ethiopia and in Djibouti. After that, Nils Enqvist covered the operations in southern Sudan and in Kenya, while the team leader went to Mozambique. The team joined up in Rome for a mission de-briefing on Monday, June 4.

The drafts of the evaluation executive summary and of the final report were submitted within the time frame set by the TORs.

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<sup>2</sup> see the text of this briefing session in annex IV

<sup>3</sup> see next chapter





## 2. METHODOLOGY

The mission was performed according to the TORs attached to the present report as annex I.

The agenda of the mission is attached as annex II. The list of interviews is listed in annex III.

The initial idea was to conduct:

- a desk study of all SOs;
- a selection of three case studies in the field, one for each category of SOs<sup>4</sup>;
- a joint field study by the two consultants of one of the three case studies, and a separate field study, by each consultant, of each of the other two case studies.

In preparation of this plan, the terms of reference were analysed into grid of value factors, which grid was intended to be applied to the desk study of SO files. Similarly, an evaluation grid, containing the parameters set forth by the terms of reference, was drafted for use on the field case studies. However, it became clear, from the very first days, that this method could not be pursued due to the lack of proper documentation. Hence, the elaboration of the above mentioned grids, and their completion with appraising valuing coefficients had to be abandoned.

Upon arrival in Rome, a list of 335 ongoing SOs was submitted to the mission, as well as files said to contain key documents for these operations. Hardly any document was made available regarding past SOs, however. According to logistics staff, these amounted to some hundred<sup>6</sup>.

Finance documents offered some information, but merely related to finances. The Resources Mobilisation Services submitted narrative reports regarding fifteen SOs, partly covering the box files remitted by OTL on thirty-three ongoing operations, and partly on closed operations. Some confusion emerged regarding the terminology used, when considering an operation open, active, closed, open but not active, or financially open, or any combination thereof. Consequently, it took a small exercise in itself to establish the list of actual ongoing operations.

These constraints, resulting from the lack of documents and by the absence of key staff, led the mission to discuss with OEDE and OTL a change of methodology. It was pleaded, by the mission, that assessing past operations for the period 1996 – 1999 upon one single narrative report drafted, post-factum, for purely administrative reasons<sup>7</sup> would not be a valid approach. The contents of these ad hoc narrative reports – in as far as available<sup>8</sup> – could not be corroborated nor contradicted. The mission argued that it would make more sense to focus on the twenty-four actually ongoing operations out of the list of thirty or so approved and current SOs. Indeed, for these twenty-four ongoing operations, data seemed to exist or could be obtained. Another reason was that lessons learned through the evaluation could apply to the ongoing operation itself, as well as to any extension, expansion or to any new operation of a similar kind.

This change of approach was agreed upon.

WFP also decided that the mission should not look into detail into operations concerning passenger air transport services, as this kind of operation would be the subject of a future, separate, study.

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<sup>4</sup> one infrastructure operation, one air operation, one multifaceted operation

<sup>5</sup> later corrected to thirty-two;

<sup>6</sup> in fact, quite less: see further in the chapter “desk study”

<sup>7</sup> reporting to donors

<sup>8</sup> see later: only six narrative reports were made available on closed operations



While the matter of a funding shortfall for current SOs was a major issue at stake, the evaluation of the causes to such shortfall, as well as any considerations on donor concerns, was not to be addressed by the mission, as it would be the subject of a separate review.

The desk study was completed through the perusal of available documents and through Headquarters staff interviews. In some operations, initial desk assessments could be complemented through verifying files in the field offices<sup>9</sup> and through interviewing staff that had been involved in operations in other countries<sup>10</sup>. However, the formal use of evaluation grids on desk files in Rome headquarters had to be abandoned, because of insufficient documentation in files at Headquarters level.

In the field, the evaluation was conducted through study of available documents<sup>11</sup>, through interviews and through site visits. The main questionnaire was handled, sometimes adapted into ad hoc questionnaires for the evaluators' own use.

During the de-briefing session in Rome, on June 4, advantage was made of presentation transparencies. Regular reaction-triggering methods were applied with success. Some valuable information was added by headquarters staff during the de-briefing and this proved to be an important complement to information proffered at the start of the evaluation, especially in terms of clarifying numerous issues. Although it was clear that OT staff did not agree with some of the mission's conclusions and recommendations, the de-briefing was an opportunity for a frank exchange of views and allowed the mission to better appreciate some of the reasons behind the establishment of a number of SOs, as well as why they had been carried out in a certain way.

### 3. DESK STUDY

#### Inventory

Upon arrival, the mission was given files with documents pertaining to the following operations:

1	5857	Angola: passenger air transport
2	5970	Angola: non food items air transport (classified as infrastructure)
3	5887	Angola: de-mining
4	10027	Angola: multifaceted voice and data communications
5	6289	Bhutan: emergency bridge repairs
6	6325	Burundi: air operations.
7	10029	DPR Korea: multifaceted - local blended food production/logistics
8	6191	Djibouti: port rehabilitation and up-grading
9	6243	Djibouti: roads repair and rehabilitation
10	TBA	Djibouti: provision for transportation
11	6178	East Timor: multifaceted - logistics operation
12	6247	Ethiopia: light aircraft
13	6248	Ethiopia: logistics co-ordination unit (classified as air)
14	6261	Ethiopia/Somalia: Berbeira corridor emergency road rehabilitation
15	6262	Eritrea: augmentation of logistics capacity
16	TBA	Guinea: passenger air transport

<sup>9</sup> in Kenya, for instance, regarding the Garissa-Dadaab road rehabilitation and the Emergency Road & River Crossing Repairs; also in Addis Ababa, in Djibouti and in Maputo

<sup>10</sup> in Djibouti for instance, where a staff member who had been involved in the Liberia road construction, was interviewed on the Liberia operation

<sup>11</sup> in practically all cases much more complete than headquarters' files, as it seems that primary filing was and is done in the field offices.



17	6320	Georgia: Caucasus passenger air transport – regional light aircraft
18	10024	India: Augmentation of logistics capacity for Orissa earthquake
19	6031	Italy: WFP strategic stocks/warehouse – UNHRD.
20	6282	Kenya: Garissa-Dadaad road rehabilitation
21	6277	Kenya: emergency road & river crossing
22	6133	Kosovo: multifaceted - transport
23	6004	Liberia: roads and bridges rehabilitation
24	6238	Madagascar: floods logistics
25	6237	Mozambique: multifaceted - floods
26	6230	Mozambique: air rescue
27	6071	Sierra Leone: helicopter support
28	6229	Sierra Leone: logistics support
29	5866	Somalia: common air service
30	6036	Southern Sudan: emergency aid (classified as infrastructure)
31	6219	Zambia: air transport of food

Later on, a single interim narrative report on

32	5869	Rwanda: regional operation
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Having been informed that the above list concerned only ongoing operations, the mission asked for completed operations.

The following files on completed operations were then received:

a) Final narrative reports on:

1	6184	Improvement to Lugufu road and rail siding
2	5898	Isaka cargo centre
3	various	Caucasus: Logistics
4	5865 and 5891	Sierra Leone: logistics capacity
5	5868	Bosnia: logistics unit
6	6005	Dadaab: air bridge

B) A list of some hundred SO pledges from 1996 to 1999.

The reading of the list B, combined with interviews of staff, made it clear that list B contained an enumeration of some hundred donor contribution numbers, each donor contribution having received a separate number, even when several contributions concerned the same operation. Consequently, there have not been some hundred SOs over the years 1996 – 1999, but considerably less. The Special Operations Working Group list, in their report dated May 2, 2001, also noted the number of closed contributions as closed SOs.

Some thousand documents were received from the Finance Division, concerning closed and ongoing operations.

The evaluation mission did not consider its mandate to be the reconciliation of all those documents into establishing a final list of actually closed SOs, nor to chase missing documents and to compile more or



less comprehensive files<sup>12</sup> allowing an independent, scientifically justified, desk study. Thus, the desk study of closed operations was abandoned.

In a second step, the mission identified among the submitted files the actual ongoing operations. It was indeed found that not all thirty-two operations were active. Some six were not, due to lack of funding<sup>13</sup>. Operation # 19 was the move of the Pisa warehouse to Brindisi, and could not be considered a SO in the sense of any of the four definitions currently in use at WFP

### **Documentary cover**

The evaluation mission subsequently inventoried the documents per operation said to be ongoing. In many, but not all, files, the main documents consisted of the operation proposal, the PRC decision where applicable, the authorisation, the extension if applicable, and some narrative reports. Most Headquarters SO files were insufficiently documented.

The DPR Korea multifaceted operation contained only the approval document as well as e-mail exchange. The East Timor file showed an operational proposal and an interim narrative report dated June 2000. The major India relief operation was illustrated by the proposal document and the official approval. The Kosovo file contained the two extension documents dated December 1999 and February 2000. The Madagascar operational file did not contain any report. The Guinea air transport operation file held only the decision taken in April 2001, the Angola non-food item air transport SO only the project description.

The evaluation mission decided not to make an exhaustive inventory of documentary cover per file, indicating available and missing documents. The operations were regularly insufficiently documented from an administrative point of view. Such insufficiency led, sometimes, to confusion with those who were not permanently involved in the operation. It happened to the evaluation mission when confronted, in the Djibouti road operation, with a fundamental contradiction between the wording of the operation's scope and the subject of the agreement signed between WFP and the Government of Djibouti<sup>14</sup>.

Although the insufficiency of documentary cover did not prevent the evaluation mission from reaching conclusions on main evaluation criteria, no doubt more detailed desk study conclusions could have been reached with comprehensive files.

### **Analysis**

When reading the file pertaining to the Bhutan operation<sup>15</sup>, the question arose as to whether this operation was a SO at all, in any of the four definitions applied by WFP. The Bhutan operation was not related to any EMOP or PRRO, was not intended to overcome existing logistics bottlenecks hindering the delivery of direly needed emergency food aid.

The Bhutan file led the evaluation mission to compare the four definitions presently in use at WFP, in their chronological order.

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<sup>12</sup> which would not have been possible in the time frame of two weeks foreseen, not to mention the absence of staff during the first week

<sup>13</sup> operations # 3, 5, 10, 20, 21, 33

<sup>14</sup> The contracts signed with the Government of Djibouti regarding both road rehabilitation and port infrastructure were found in the files at the Djibouti CO, not in headquarters' files

<sup>15</sup> the operation that did not take place due to lack of funding



Transport Manual 1998:

- complementary to emergency
- limited in scope and size
- short-term
- targeted to eliminate specific operational bottlenecks that hinder the efficient and cost-effective delivery of relief aid
- covers non-food related activities not covered by LTSH and DSC, such as airlifts, telecommunications and interventions on roads, bridges, ports and equipment ahead of future developments, in order to permit quick and cost-effective delivery of relief cargo on a sustainable basis.

Guide to WFP Resources and Long-term Financing Policies, 1999:

- improve infrastructure for speedy and efficient delivery of food aid
- also serving as a vehicle for rehabilitation and future development
- no commodities are provided

General Regulations, 2000:

- activities to rehabilitate and enhance transport infrastructure
- if necessary and in extraordinary circumstances
- to permit speedy and efficient food delivery
- to meet emergency and protracted relief needs

Programme Design Manual, 2001:

- logistics and infrastructure works
- to help the movement of WFP and non-WFP food
- short-term in nature
- generally complementary to emergency operations
- covers non-food related activities that are not covered by LTSH, DSC or DOC, such as airlifts, telecommunications, works to roads, bridges, ports.

While the Programme Design Manual (PDM) obviously follows the definition of the OT Manual, both are somewhat dissimilar from the definition given by General Regulations. The definition given by General Regulations is more restrictive than the one previously used by OT. OT continued applying the broader definition of SOs, in the sense that, in the management of these operations, the short-term criterion was not always abided by.

The operations in Madagascar (floods), Zambia (air transport of food) and Kenya (road infrastructure for food transport) no doubt answered the criteria set forth in any of the four definitions of SOs: delivery of food, emergency situation and logistics problems. This did not prevent the evaluation mission from questioning in what sense these operations were special, however. The Zambia air transport was planned to transport 300 tons of food, for a cost of US\$133,000. No serious explanation was given why the air delivery of these 300 tons was so special that the airlift could not have been included in the standard LTSH matrix of costs proper to any WFP operation. The road situation in Kenya and in southern Sudan is well known to WFP for having been active in these regions for many years. The yearly recurrence of rain and its impact on road infrastructure should, hence, not come as a surprise and the road works as an extraordinary unforeseen event. That the two Kenya SOs did not become operational, due to funding problems, did not prevent WFP from delivering its food, which illustrates that the two SOs may not have been so vital to the underlying operations.



While the operations in Liberia, in Djibouti and in Sierra Leone seemed to respond to criteria set forth in the definitions of the OT manual and in the PDM, it was not immediately clear to the evaluation team whether the operations were in accordance with the General Regulations.

The scope of operations like the reconstruction of the Caucasus railway system went, at first sight, far beyond any of the four definitions.

Finally, operations like East Timor, Mozambique air rescue and India earthquake<sup>16</sup> relief appeared to be full fledged complex disaster relief operations.

A *finding* of the desk study was, hence:

- the absence of a firm and final definition of a special operation;
- an apparent tendency to include into SOs logistics components that, in previous times, may have been included in ITSH or LTSH<sup>17</sup>;
- the setting up of a few SOs that, although being no doubt useful and helpful, were not that vital to the underlying relief operation that their non-realisation would jeopardise the underlying operation<sup>18</sup>;
- a tendency to address major issues that went far beyond the origin of WFP's interventions;<sup>19</sup>
- a call from the international community to WFP to take the lead in complex humanitarian operations.<sup>20</sup>

Staff insisted on the linkage between the necessity to set up SOs and obtaining funding. Considering the increase of the costs related to the logistics component of food aid operations,<sup>21</sup> donors were less and less eager to contribute in full, with an LTSH part higher than half the cost of the operation. The evaluation mission was told that a majority of donors preferred WFP setting up SOs, which would enable donors to appreciate more in detail the logistical work and its costs. Donors were said to be more willing to finance SOs than higher LTSH costs under EMOPs or PRROs, sometimes because of budgetary source and regulation reasons.

As logical as this explanation may be, the current funding situation of SOs<sup>22</sup> does not seem to confirm donors honouring their initial preferences. This contradiction can, most probably, be explained through several reasons highlighted by the internal WFP Special Operations Working Group in their report issued on in May 2001 – findings to many of which the evaluation mission can subscribe. The contradiction nevertheless remains and will be investigated through a donor survey, to be undertaken as part of the OTL-managed review in 2002.

## Justification

Based upon the available documents in incomplete files, the evaluation mission had to make a distinction between the justification of the activities performed by the SO and the justification of these activities being performed under the cover of a SO.

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<sup>16</sup> East Timor also

<sup>17</sup> Zambia, Madagascar

<sup>18</sup> that was the impression given while reading the files on the Djibouti, the Kenya and the southern Sudan operations

<sup>19</sup> Caucasus railway network; Liberia roads construction

<sup>20</sup> India, Mozambique air rescue, East Timor

<sup>21</sup> from 30 % to 60 % of the cost of an operation

<sup>22</sup> see introduction: 22 million dollars out of 90 million dollars required in 2000



Almost all the activities described in the operations proposals and/or narratives, whether they were actually realised in full or partially, whether they had been effective and cost-efficient<sup>23</sup> or not, seemed justified *per se*.

Questions on the justification nevertheless arose in the evaluation team's minds concerning:

- Bhutan road and bridge repairs: for there was no food component; there was no existing emergency<sup>24</sup>; the rationale of donkeys being more expensive than trucks was not immediately convincing.
- Mine clearance in Angola: for it was not clear whether mine clearance fits easily with WFP's core mandate; if it should, all mine clearing world-wide could be justified for there is always relief to bring over mined roads. Although the mission believed that other agencies may be more competent to undertake mine clearance activities than WFP, some WFP staff argue that WFP should be involved in mine clearance, at least to the extent of helping to set priorities for clearing of mines from access roads.
- Helicopter services in Sierra Leone; for the impossibility of overland travel was not obvious.

In many files, the justification could not be judged, as the files did not permit a comprehensive assessment of the underlying circumstances. This was the case, among others, in:

- DPR Korea: how far was support to local blended food production justified? Was an operation bringing non-food items for food-for-work (FFW) projects justified in as far as the operation would only cover 15 % of the requirements?
- Kosovo: were all the air passenger and helicopter components justified in the light of the situation as it existed at the time of the decision? Was the fact that the truck component of the operation was not pursued an indication that the idea was not justified?
- Sierra Leone and Liberia roads: was the situation in Sierra Leone really such that it justified the various components? Was it really justified to build roads for returning displaced people in Liberia who had found the way out without these roads?
- Was the reconstruction of the whole Caucasus railway network really justified?

Finally, there remained the same questions as those asked in the previous paragraph, whether some of the activities, justified *per se*, also justified the setting up of a SO. But, in general, one can conclude that the actions, performed under the cover of SOs, were mainly justified.

### **Effectiveness, efficiency and cost-effectiveness**

The reading of the files gave the impression that most of the operations – if not all – had reached their objectives and were, hence, *effective*, even if some of them did not proceed as initially planned<sup>25</sup>, or saw some components abandoned in the course of action. There is, at least, no indication that the operations were not effective.

Whether the operations were efficiently managed maybe does not appear directly from the narrative reports or from the requests for extension or expansion, but does appear indirectly from the results

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<sup>23</sup> which in many cases did not show in the files

<sup>24</sup> only a possible emergency to come

<sup>25</sup> Mozambique road and river crossings



obtained. Unavoidably, some problems occurred, but which operation in difficult circumstances has no problems? It can be affirmed that the operations were indeed *efficiently managed*.<sup>26</sup>

The issue of cost-effectiveness requires some comments. The question of cost-effectiveness does not apply in operations initiated for the sake of safety of staff in hazard situations. Cost-effectiveness can be negative, but still necessary, like transporting one passenger in a six-seat plane when his transport is required. Cost-effectiveness can be a fact without being calculable, like enhanced telecommunications.

Cost-effectiveness can be calculated in many cases, especially in infrastructure operations. WFP have quite some experience in these matters. While, in most special operations, cost-effectiveness was obtained, it was a finding that the obtained cost-effectiveness was seldom calculated. This finding was corrected during the field mission, when it was discovered that obtained cost-effectiveness was actually more regularly calculated or at least estimated by the field teams than was evident from the more limited documentation available in the files at Headquarters.

On the other hand, while cost-efficiency forecasts were part of the reasons for which an operation was decided upon, actual estimations or anticipated cost-efficiency calculations were not regularly performed. Anticipated cost-efficiency calculations are difficult, however, and sometimes more an assumption than guaranteed correct. Nevertheless, a finding was that, *while cost-efficiency was, where applicable, obtained and regularly calculated, anticipated cost-efficiency was not calculated regularly enough* or at least tried<sup>27/28</sup>.

Sometimes, but exceptionally, ROI<sup>29</sup> calculations left the mission sceptical. Such was the case in the Kenya road & river crossing repairs operation (SO 6277). ROI would be attained in 3 years, a period of time that would exceed any sustainability of the performed works. The operation did not materialise, but was nevertheless approved. A similar remark concerns the Kenya Garissa-Dadaab road rehabilitation operation (SO 6282) in which the cost calculation was based upon a guess and the ROI was to be attained in up to three years. Finally, the cost-efficiency approach in the operation regarding the logistics co-ordination unit for the Horn was an example of an assumed cost-efficiency.

## Other findings

Some operational proposals submitted for approval, containing the objectives, indicators, proposed plan of action, etc, were well drafted, clear, to the point and well documented. Bhutan bridge repairs was an example of a well drafted proposal, notwithstanding the fact that the project did not appear to the evaluation team to be justified. The Angola air SO document was also well prepared. But many proposals were not so well drafted. The proposal for the DPR Korea operation, for instance, was difficult to understand for a reader who was not familiar with what was going on in the country. Assessments were not always clearly explained, objectives not always detailed<sup>30</sup>. Regularly, operational proposals did not refer to feasibility studies and assessments that had previously been performed, as WFP staff involved in the process appeared to assume that others would know the background.<sup>31</sup> The authors of these proposals did not always consider that their writings were also addressed to readers who were not familiar with the ongoing action. On the other hand, exaggerated attention was sometimes given on the

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<sup>26</sup> save some questionable choices of implementing tools, like the choice of a certain helicopter in a specific environment

<sup>27</sup> SO 6229 for logistics support in Sierra Leone, for instance

<sup>28</sup> one exception on cost-efficiency was the use of the helicopter in Ethiopia

<sup>29</sup> return over investment

<sup>30</sup> Mozambique roads, for instance, with a contingent of a number of kilometres of roads being taken as an objective, without identification of which roads and where.

<sup>31</sup> DPR Korea port and Djibouti port and roads, although the latter's operational proposals were well presented





narrative explaining the background to an operation<sup>32</sup>. Needless repetition of the same narrative through copy & paste appeared in many subsequent requests for extension or expansion.

All things taken into consideration, it can be said that *operational proposal drafting was not always up to required standards*.

### **Origin of weaknesses**

The origin of certain weaknesses in conceiving or conducting SOs lies in the *absence of systems & procedures*. SOs guidance is given in a section of the Transport Manual, with cross-references to existing paragraphs on other kind of operations. There is no doubt that procedures and guidelines applying to EMOPs or PRROs also apply to parts of SOs. But the importance of SOs, as well as their particular characteristics and requirements, call for a comprehensive set of operational procedures and guidelines.

The recent enforcement of the intervention of the Project Review Committee<sup>33</sup> and the introduction of a reporting format, entailed a significant improvement of proposal drafting, of presentation of arguments<sup>34</sup>, of specifying assessment parameters and performance indicators and of reporting.

The preparation of *comprehensive operational procedures & guidelines* will no doubt help to strengthen SOs. Such procedures should include, among other details:

- the precise definition of what can become a SO and the criteria required to qualify for a SO;
- strict assessment parameters;
- the identification, definition and application of performance indicators, with a distinction between key performance indicators at senior management level and tactical performance indicators for the field;
- guidelines on cost-calculation;
- forms or templates for proposal drafting, interim reporting, final reporting and financial reporting.

Implementing systems and procedures can create red tape. SOs being, in essence, emergency interventions, red tape should by all means be avoided and procedural steps regulated by a strict timetable. In some operations, delays were noted, due by various causes<sup>35</sup>. The comprehensive procedures should foresee an administrative fast track, with swift access to funds. The SO Working Group considered the possibility of waiving the PRC in case of real emergency needs. As the PRC at present seems to be a rampart<sup>36</sup> against incomplete or insufficient operational description and justification, waiving the PRC should not be recommended. Fast track procedures can also be established for PRC.

### **Reporting**

Absence of reports was noted from the beginning of the desk study. It was also noted that report writing was conducted as a major exercise in order to cover the donor reporting requirements during the period 1996 to 1999. But later, during the field study, the evaluation mission discovered that reporting from the

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<sup>32</sup> the Eritrean/Ethiopian conflict, for instance; the closure of the ports and the consequences of the war on civilians were well known facts and did not need elaboration.

<sup>33</sup> and especially the submission of the project proposal to a crossfire of questions

<sup>34</sup> Angola air SO 5857.02, for instance

<sup>35</sup> funding, recruitment, bureaucracy

<sup>36</sup> it is unlikely that the PRC would have endorsed the approval of the Bhutan bridge repairs SO, the DPR Korea SO as it was presented, the Zambia air lift SO, the Sierra Leone logistics support (SO 6229) in its proposed complexity



field had been much more regular than expected.<sup>37</sup> Hence, the reporting gap seems to have been a HQ level problem more than a field level problem. (As explained to the evaluation team at the end of its mission, this lack of documentation at HQ level was to some extent understandable, giving that primary filing and archiving of records for SOs is now done at the field level, particularly following the recent decentralization of the Regional Bureaux).

If some final narrative reports were good, others were less. Some were rather brief. Others raised questions.<sup>38</sup> Many must have come over with donors as not very interesting to read.

Mass production of reports inevitably bears on the quality of the reports. As reporting to donors is crucial not only for justifying the obtained contribution but also for securing further funding for the same or for other operations, great importance should be given to accurate, comprehensive reporting. Authors must bear in mind that the success of a report lies in the way it comes over with the reader.

In general, it was noted that the benefits realised through the operation were not highlighted enough. Many narratives consisted of the inevitable repetition of the background that led to WFP's intervention. Many reports described the activities performed. But several reports missed a main point and did not insist enough on the benefits realised, be it directly or indirectly. While it is quite correct to mention that repaired bridges and roads resulted in faster and cheaper delivery of food, that, hence, the objective of the operation was reached, it would strike donors more if they could read in full how the repairs had led to lower road haulage costs for WFP foodstuffs and, thus, lower future demands on donors for LTSH costs.

WFP should consider taking advantage of modern telecommunication and presentations techniques. Showing pictures of the mud tracks in Mozambique immediately after the recess of the floods, and of the same spot after the construction of a first class reinforced road with drainage pipes<sup>39</sup> tells, more than a written description, how successful the contributions were put unto use<sup>40</sup>. There is no need to write at length any more on the benefit for the development of the region, when the donor can compare two pictures presented side by side. Pictures of a completed berth 13 of Djibouti port, with eight trucks loading simultaneously and of some old berth of the same port with three trucks manoeuvring with difficulty alongside ship, would show in a better way the improved performance which the operation has made possible. OT should consider opening a web page per operation, consisting of a short introductory narrative, maps showing where exactly things are happening and pictures transmitted digitally of the situation that has to be addressed. Situation reports could be added in the course of action, as could new pictures showing progress. There would be no need to reproduce reports. Transparency would be guaranteed. Donor interest could be controlled by checking the number of visits to the web page.

## **Budgeting**

The reading of the documents submitted by the Finance Division showed that, regularly, confusion had occurred regarding the contributions. The study of these documents, combined with the interview of staff members, revealed that a number of contributions had been mixed up, not been used, or wrongly earmarked. It suffices to refer to the findings noted in the WFP internal SO Working Group report. Again, the absence of specific systems and procedures for finances related to SOs were at the origin of the difficulties.

Seemingly, no budget was ever underestimated. On the contrary, in some cases, budgets seem to have been overestimated<sup>41</sup>, without, however, the operation suffering from it or being jeopardised. While it

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<sup>37</sup> sometimes up to every fortnight, which was exaggerated

<sup>38</sup> Angola SO air report states figures for 1999 at 458 tons per month, while the proposal for the year 2000 states a rate of 1.000 tons per month

<sup>39</sup> as did the Mozambique staff.

<sup>40</sup> even if the operation missed its initial objective – see later in the chapter on field case studies.

<sup>41</sup> CLAU, Liberia roads, Mozambique roads and Djibouti port.



can be defended that overestimating is better than underestimating, the impact on donors should not be underrated, especially considering that WFP has to remain competitive with other operators in an environment that shows some donor fatigue. Again, operational procedures, among other things on budget calculation, with guidelines on how to estimate costs per subject per area<sup>42</sup>, would help. Albeit that it is not always easy to estimate budgets, and that completing an operation with half the expected budget does not mean that the initial budget was totally wrong. Especially in road infrastructure, any budget can be defended, with prices varying tenfold per region, per period, per contractor<sup>43</sup>, and, of course, per intended kind of work. It can also be defended that the initial scope of the operation was set too high, that WFP managed with a partial budget and so avoided spending money on extensive road repairs in that particular area.

Anyhow, the fact that WFP realised its operations with reduced funding should entice WFP not to merely subtract obtained funds from required funds and call the balance a shortfall. Announcing a shortfall to donors, while reporting that a majority of operations were nevertheless completed, could create confusion, if it were not stressed in the reporting to donors how objectives were downscaled in order to meet the available funding.

## 4. FIELD CASE STUDIES

### SO 6230 – Mozambique: air transport

#### Narrative

When the floods rose foot after foot and the emergency became a matter of hours, not days, the representatives of donors and foreign countries grabbed their telephones and called for help. There was no time for donor meetings, joint co-ordination seminars or other discussions.

The South African Air Force was first on the spot, followed by the Malawi Air Force and two private South African enterprises. Other countries joined. WFP stepped in from the very beginning, supporting the South African Air Force, distributing food and non-food and taking gradually the lead in the Joint Logistics Co-ordination Unit<sup>44</sup>, overcoming the reluctance of the military and the reservations of other agencies.

From February to the beginning of March, some 2,000 people were rescued daily from treetops. In total, for the period February to March 27, 2000, an estimated 16,551 people were rescued. Some 11,789 tons of relief cargo was distributed. Flight hours amounted to 9,678, with aircraft flying 6 hours per day, 7 days per week. The airlifts covered 259 destinations.

In April 2000, only the South African Air Force remained operational, with WFP funding. Gradually, air transport shifted towards other pick-up points that had become accessible with floods receding and ground transport becoming possible. Air transport came to a complete halt in May 2000<sup>45</sup>. Total figures for the period March – May show 30,339 passengers, 11,633 tons of relief goods, food and non-food alike, all flown in 9,318 hours. At a certain period during the relief operations, some 57 aircraft were operating<sup>46</sup>, belonging to 15 operators with 24 different types of aircraft.

The Joint Logistics Co-ordination Unit ceased its functions around May 15, 2000.

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<sup>42</sup> similar to existing rates for air charter, shipping, port dues, handling charges.

<sup>43</sup> state or private.

<sup>44</sup> set up on March 4, under the umbrella of the Mozambique Foreign Office

<sup>45</sup> it resumed in February 2001

<sup>46</sup> including some civilians, who operated on their own and did not listen to advice.



## Comments

Although the theatre of operations does not, nowadays, show much of what happened, one can, based upon the pictures, and with the help of the lively description by WFP staff, easily visualise the scenery. A right stretch of national road used as a makeshift airfield, WFP staff establishing an office in a local grocery store, hundreds of displaced people setting up huts and tents all around, staff cars and trucks coming and going to and from Maputo, some 130 km south, a ballet of Cessnas and choppers taking off and landing, avoiding children, goats and dogs that cross the road-runway.

It was a relief operation of the first degree, where decisions had to be taken by the hour. There was no time for well-considered flight plans, just take off and rescue. Logistics had to be arranged and implemented overnight, co-ordination enforced on the ground. And it was done. The Mozambique relief operation was a fine achievement.

The low numbers of casualties<sup>47</sup>, the absence of starvation or malnutrition, the absence of epidemics, are clear indicators that the operation was a success.

While South African crews did the flying, the operation being a success can be attributed to WFP who funded the South African Air Force, brought relief goods and, as from March 2000, took the leading co-ordinating role.

It is worth quoting a paragraph of one of the regularly issued sitreps.

*"The Joint Logistics co-ordination was an unprecedented arrangement in a flood disaster. The use of JLOC was a lesson learned from complex emergencies, which usually involved military actions, their first use in a natural disaster. Also new was that UNOHCA sent somebody from its military and civil defence unit for co-ordinating the military assets".*

The floods resumed in February 2001, and the operation was reactivated, with some US\$500,000 of unspent contributions carried forward from the initial budget of US\$2.7 million. It is understood that the newly started operation, although being a complete new operation compared to its predecessor of 2000, was kept under the same number for the ease of carrying forward the unused balance of funds. This argument is not convincing, and it may have been recommendable to separate the two operations, as circumstances are not the same, means are not the same, co-ordination is not the same, monitoring and reporting cannot be the same

The operation went along the same lines as the previous one in 2000, the underlying EMOP closing at the end of May 2001.

## Systematic answer to the questions quoted in the terms of reference

### Main questions

- *Was the operation justified?*

The operation was fully justified. Without the operation many people would have died.

- *Was the operation well planned?*

While circumstances did not permit any advanced planning, operational planning hour by hour and day by day was well done. Seemingly, the same good planning is at hand in the operation during 2001.

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<sup>47</sup> some 700



- *Was the operation well processed?*

The operation was a masterpiece in its achievement. There are no indications that the new part of the operation (April 2001) will not be as good as the old part.

### **Detailed questions**

- *Were the needs correctly assessed?*

As from the very beginning of the disaster, the needs were correctly assessed as they showed one after the other.

*Were the project objectives well defined, was the project well designed and prepared, and to what extent were the goals, objectives and indicators of the operation appropriate, adequate, relevant, valid and inter-linked with those of the underlying EMOP or PRRO?*

The nature of the disaster made preparation, object definition and indicator reading superfluous. Objectives were set hour by hour. Indicators changed day by day, and were read accordingly. But all objectives were perfectly valid, and in line with the EMOP. As a matter of fact, some objectives of the operation stood on their own, still valid, relevant and to the point.

- *Was the budget correctly assessed? Were the required resources adequately identified? Was there any shortfall and were there any implications of such a shortfall?*

The budget was correctly assessed and there was no shortfall. An unspent balance of US\$500,000 remained available for the renewal of the operation during 2001. Considering the circumstances, an unspent balance cannot be held against the people who estimated the budget. Whether the budget estimate for part 2001 of the operation is correct cannot be commented upon yet. Resources identification was not feasible in advance. Resources were used in a progressive manner upon their arrival in the disaster theatre.

- *Did the operation achieve its objectives and or those of the underlying operation? How effective was the implementation of the operation?*

The operation in 2000 definitely met its objectives. There are no indications that the year 2001 operation will not be as effective.

- *Was the operation timely planned and timely implemented?*

The nature of the disaster made any advance planning impossible. The operation was reviewed on a daily basis and implemented according to this planning.

- *How was the level of co-ordination with partners? How effective was the partnership?*

The complexity of the operation, the number of participants, the inherent weakness of some state organisations, required a centralised command and a permanent co-ordination with task distribution. WFP managed to install and to effectively manage such a joint cell, surmounting military reluctance against civilians, as well as reservations of other participants. The co-ordination proved to be optimal, and it can be stated that the partnership proved effective thanks to the management of the JLOC by WFP.

- *How was the level of co-ordination between the CO and OTL regarding planning, implementing and monitoring?*



The nature of the disaster and the circumstances were of such a kind that only field decisions could be effective. There was no time for combined planning and preparation. Day-by-day implementation was assured by the field.

- *How effective and relevant were monitoring and reporting?*

With WFP actually leading the operation, monitoring was undertaken during implementation. Reporting was done, when priorities permitted.

- *Was the staffing of the CO adequate and up to the task?*

The efficiency and the competence of the CO task force made this operation a success.

- *Were there any positive or negative interfering factors or constraints?*

The operators benefited from some luck, by having road access to the makeshift airstrip, by having a mill and stores close by. Fair weather conditions played a role for rescue operations. Fast contributions helped a lot.

- *Was the operation cost-effective?*

The operation can be considered as having been cost-effective. The question cannot be answered yet for year 2001 of the operation, although the budget estimate of US\$8.4 million seems very high.

- *Has the operation brought lasting and sustainable assets and to whose benefit?*

The operation was not intended to do so, and did not. It saved lives, allowed people to have shelter, food, water, and avoided epidemics.

- *How was the co-ordination and the communication with donors?*

The co-ordination and communication on the ground was daily, effective and appreciated by everybody.

## **SO 6237 – Mozambique: emergency roads and river crossing repairs**

### **Narrative**

This SO was the natural continuation of the air rescue operations carried out during the floods that hit Mozambique in February 2000. Food and other items had to reach those who had remained in their living areas. Support for the living, displaced and non-displaced, had to be delivered. The floods had destroyed or damaged important parts of roads and river crossings.

Having seen pictures of the situation of the roads (bush tracks) and crossing points before the operation started, the mission believes that there is no doubt that the operation was justified and its concept valid.

A project proposal was submitted and approved in June 2000, i.e. immediately after the air transport operations had halted.

While the project proposal document was well drafted, clear and seemingly to the point, the budget estimate was based upon cost assessments obtained from the Mozambique National Road Administration. Consequently, a budget estimate of US\$3.3 million was proposed.

Contributions from donors began to arrive in August 2000.



At that time, the Mozambique Government and WFP had not yet identified which roads and river crossings would be repaired in which order of priority. A certain number of kilometres had been decided upon for cost-calculation reasons, without identifying which sections of which roads would be part of the project. Indeed, the Mozambique Government wanted to remain the master of the works, arguing that the roads were government property. The implementation of the operation could not be left in the hands of WFP

In September 2000, a decision was reached on which part of which roads and crossings would be repaired. The Mozambique Government issued requests for tenders. WFP assisted the Government in the bidding procedures.

Works actually started in November 2000, i.e. 6 months later. Today, the works are still not finished. In the province of Xai-Xai, road works started only in April 2001.

Out of an estimated budget of US\$3.3 million, US\$1.43 million appear to have been contributed. The actual works contract value after tendering was said to be US\$797,000 of which US\$498,616 have not yet been used, either because the works have not been finished yet, or the invoices have not been submitted yet. What has been constructed is of remarkable quality, allowing fast traffic with speed up to 100 km. per hour.

### **Comments**

By switching from emergency air rescue and air transport to ground transport, once feasible, and by rehabilitating roads in order to ensure faster, larger and safer delivery of relief goods and food, WFP took a justifiable decision. In itself, the idea of the operation was valid. Albeit that the main question remains, whether such logistics support to an EMOP<sup>48</sup> should be considered a “special operation” or a normal component of an EMOP

In this particular case, the operation did not turn out to be an emergency support operation to an EMOP. For whatever reason, works started with delays which were so long that the road works could not be defined any more as bottleneck troubleshooting in order to implement the EMOP. What was supposed to be road rehabilitation for delivering emergency food and relief goods turned into a full fledged road development project, going far beyond its original scope. The underlying EMOP came to an end on March 2001. Some road works started in April 2001, and many works are still in progress.

That the operation became a full road development project is also illustrated by the fact that many feeder roads resulted from the main road construction, which feeder roads were never conceived in the initial plan. The mission was even told that, as a direct result of the road network improvement, the Governments of Mozambique and of South Africa had decided to expand the Krüger National Park eastwards into Mozambique. Another element pointing towards the development character of the road works was the addition of some reinforcement works, such as 90 cm. water drainage pipes, which had not been foreseen in the initial concept of fast road rehabilitation. As a road development project, the operation can be considered successful, bringing sustainable assets to the country. It is questionable whether the operation as it is presently implemented can still be considered as a special operation in any definition set forth by WFP, however.

The SO was not an effective support for the underlying EMOP, as the EMOP had to continue with rudimentary tools over bad tracks and with canoes. A significant logistics support gap existed between May 2000 and about December 2000, the estimated month when the first sections of some roads were ready.

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<sup>48</sup> EMOP 6225



Planning wise, the operation cannot be considered a success, for it started in such a way that it had actually already become a development programme, totally separated from the Mozambique relief operation. While the works are presently proceeding more or less according to plan, this planning has nothing to do any more with the planning of the implementation of the EMOP. As a matter of fact, the SO that was foreseen to last only 3 months was, 11 months later, still going on.

The Government of Mozambique remains sovereign in its road works and it is doubtful whether WFP would have obtained free implementation authority for its road rehabilitation project. Also, governments have a tendency to take advantage of a disaster situation to support some other activities. But questions arise as to whether any steps were taken for WFP to remain the executive master of the operation, instead of supporting the Government of Mozambique in its road works. The documents shown do not answer this question in a satisfactory way. Neither are there answers to the question as to why it took until September 2000 before the actual choice of road sections to be rehabilitated was made. This absence of answers points towards an absence of clear detailed objectives when conceiving the idea of road rehabilitation. A detailed work programme as a framework to the operation does not seem to have existed.

The issue of operational management does not apply much, for the operational management was and is in the hands of the Government of Mozambique. But questions as to whether WFP could and should have intervened more proactively with the Government in order to speed up matters remain.

Cost-effectiveness *per se* can be calculated, in as far as the freight rate dropped by half, from US\$0.18 per ton/km to US\$0.09 per ton/km. But the issue does not apply to the underlying EMOP, for the reasons stated above. As such, the SO was not cost-effective in the framework of the Mozambique relief operation, but is as a broader road development programme.

The initial budget estimate does not seem too have been correct. In fact, the budget estimate was based upon cost assessment done by the Government. The budget estimate in the project proposal was a theoretical one, however, as the choice of which road sections would be rehabilitated was not done at the time of the submission of the project proposal. Consequently, the calculations in the project proposal were not in accordance with existing chosen objectives. Hence, it is not surprising that out of a budget estimate of US\$3.3 million, only about ten percent had been used at the time of the evaluation mission's visit. Provided the existing balance of US\$498.616 will be spent, the operation's cost will remain well below half of the budget estimate. WFP cannot deduct from this difference that the operation had a budget shortfall of more than 50 %. There does not seem to be any shortfall.

Monitoring and reporting was and is technically excellent.

Co-ordination with donors was regularly assured in the field, in particular with the Italian Embassy.

## **Systematic answer to the questions quoted in the Terms of Reference**

### **Main questions**

- *Was the operation justified?*

In itself the operation was justified at the moment of its conception. But the operation drifted towards something different.

- *Was the operation well planned?*

The operation was not well planned. A general, theoretical, plan was drafted and its implementation in detail decided upon much later on.

- *Was the operation well processed?*





The operation was not well processed as an emergency logistics support operation to the underlying EMOP. It was implemented as a development project.

### Detailed questions

- *Were the needs correctly assessed?*

The needs, i.e. the rehabilitation of roads and river crossing in order to reach the beneficiaries, were correctly assessed in principle. In short: the needs were to reach these people in a faster and safer way, with a higher volume of relief goods than was the case. This assessment was correct.

*Were the project objectives well defined, was the project well designed and prepared, and to what extent were the goals, objectives and indicators of the operation appropriate, adequate, relevant, valid and inter-linked with those of the underlying EMOP or PRRO?*

The objectives were defined only in general. No detailed work plan was prepared. But the general objectives and indicators of the operation were valid at the time of their conception and in line with the objectives of the underlying EMOP. However, the lack of detailed preparation, of timetable planning and of assessment of technical feasibility and technical realities made the operation falter in its original scope.

- *Was the budget correctly assessed? Were the required resources adequately identified? Was there any budget shortfall and were there any implications of such a shortfall?*

The budget was initially not assessed, but based upon cost estimates presented by the Government for a theoretical number of kilometres. These estimates do not seem to have been counter-checked. Moreover, they were theoretical for the choice of precise road and crossing sections had not been done in advance. Consequently, the budget seemed to be over-estimated. No shortfall occurred.

- *Did the operation achieve its objectives and or those of the underlying operation? How effective was the implementation of the operation?*

The operation did not reach its objectives as support to the underlying EMOP. It does in the process of reaching its new objectives as a road development project. The implementation of the operation as initially conceived was not successful, but is successful as it presently implemented.

- *Was the operation timely planned and timely implemented?*

The operation was timely planned, and was foreseen to take three months. The operation was not timely implemented, starting with five months' delay and was still ongoing at the time of the evaluation, eleven months later.

- *How was the level of co-ordination with partners? How effective was the partnership?*

Legal constraints seem to have resulted in the implementation being the mandate of the Government. Consequently, WFP was reduced to a monitoring and paying function, without prejudice to technical assistance in the bidding procedures. The partnership was not very effective in as far as the Government could not implement the operation as it had been conceived by WFP. It cannot be excluded either that the Government did not have the same objectives as WFP.

- *How was the level of co-ordination between the CO and OTL regarding planning, implementing and monitoring?*

It seems that the operation was jointly assessed and discussed between the CO and OTL. The contract with the Government was signed by OTL. The bulk of the work was done by the CO and OTL was systematically informed. It is not clear whether OTL and or CO tried to steer a corrective



course when it became obvious that the operation was not going to reach its objectives in line with the EMOP. Questions also arise as to whether the Government's legal privileges were not subject to negotiation, although the answer is probably no.

- *How effective and relevant were monitoring and reporting?*

From a technical point of view, monitoring and reporting were very good, except that the drifting of the operation into a road development project seems to have been taken with a certain fatalism.

- *Was the staffing of the CO adequate and up to the task?*

The CO staff met during the evaluation gave an impression of dedication and efficiency. The reports confirm their competence.

- *Were there any positive or negative interfering factors or constraints?*

The main issue was the control of the Government of Mozambique over the implementation of the works.

- *Was the operation cost-effective?*

As a road development project, the cost-effectiveness can easily be calculated. Considering the drastic decrease of the freight rates versus the limited amount invested, the cost-effectiveness is clear.

- *Has the operation brought lasting and sustainable assets and to whose benefit?*

The operation, as implemented, is bringing lasting sustainable assets in the form of good roads, with feeder roads being created. Traffic increase and easier movement will enhance development for the benefit of the Mozambicans.

- *How was the co-ordination and the communication with donors?*

The main donor, the Italian Government, was systematically kept informed through its Embassy. Communication was good.

## **SO 6191 – Djibouti: port infrastructure and equipment support**

### **Narrative**

During the last part of 1999 WFP, expecting a large increase of tonnage through Djibouti port, conceived the idea of improving the port's discharge and forwarding capacity of bulk food, bringing it up from some 600 tons<sup>49</sup> per day to 3,000 tons per day.

The improvement consisted in tearing down two old warehouses, creating a flat surface on berth 13 allowing four bagging machines, with two conveyor belts each, working simultaneously perpendicularly to the ship. In the previous constellation, the width of the quay between the blue stone and the warehouse did not permit the conveyor belts be placed perpendicularly, thus reducing the number of loading trucks to a maximum of five, more regularly a maximum of four. Moreover, the trucks had to manoeuvre back and forth, one at the time, resulting in slower transshipment.

A second component of the project was to erect a semi-permanent new warehouse of 5,500 tons capacity, immediately behind the existing 6,000 tons warehouse at berth 15.

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<sup>49</sup> Port's Operations Manager quoted 600 tons per day; WFP Regional Logistics Officer quoted 1,500 tons per day. The latter figure appears to be the correct one.



The third component was the installation of four weighbridges in the port. This component was abandoned due to the lack of funding.

By May 2000, the warehouses were torn down and, according to the final report dated March 15, 2001, berth 13 could be used at 90 % of its capacity. However, the soil underneath berth 13 was criss-crossed by oil pipelines and would not resist the weight and pressure from up to 8 40 tons fully loaded and a fleet of empty waiting trucks manoeuvring at the same time. Reinforcing the surface at berth 13 was completed by October 12, 2000. According to the same final report, a first vessel discharged at the new berth 13 on October 15, 2000.

The site where the new semi-permanent warehouse would be erected was ready by August 3, 2000, and the warehouse itself was operational on August 29.

Additional works, consisting of surfacing close to the new warehouse, in case the Midrock project would be implemented, were ready by September 29.

The contract between the Port of Djibouti and WFP was signed on May 20, 2000, i.e. after the works had started. On May 22, the Port of Djibouti and the Port of Dubai signed a contract according to which the Port of Dubai would absorb and manage the Port of Djibouti. This contract had been preceded by a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two ports on May 8, 2000.

According to the contract signed between the Port of Djibouti and WFP :

*"whereas WFP desires to mobilise resources to increase the Port of Djibouti's capacity; whereas the Port of Djibouti accepts to maintain its current rates for port charges applicable to WFP cargo, until the bulk terminal becomes operational, and accepts to contribute various elements to facilitate a successful implementation of the suggested project; .....the Port of Djibouti continues its preferential port services to WFP, including preferential berthing whenever possible and every effort to provide port dues at present discounted rates, the Port of Djibouti ... relocates the port captain's office, ... provides an office for the S.K.H. engineer, ... disconnects old telephone lines, ...provides the land where WFP can erect its semi-permanent warehouse, ... remove material and debris from the surface ..."*

In January 2001, the new masters of the Port increased the discharge rates from US\$1.35 per ton to US\$2.85 per ton.

Today, the future of the Midrock project remains uncertain, and its implications on the existence of WFP's semi-permanent warehouse a matter of speculation. According to the General Manager of the Port, WFP may have to move its warehouse. The Operations Manager affirms the contrary.

In the course of 2000, the monthly average tonnage transhipped in Djibouti increased significantly, reaching peaks of 86,000, 96,000 and 126.000 tons per month, or up to 4,000 tons per day, which is, of course, pure theory, for ships did not arrive nicely one after the other. One must consider that Djibouti probably managed up to 7,000 tons per day, if not more, at certain peak periods.

## Comments

The following comments should be read with the overall caveat that, justified or not, the whole operation cost only US\$1 million, which, in comparison with the value of the cargo that benefited from the operation, is not a significant sum of money.

Another caveat is the matter of hindsight. If the mission hazarded some comments or reservations during their field visit, they had all the benefits of hindsight. The operation must be placed in its right context,



with a dramatic increase of relief cargo expected in a short period of time<sup>50</sup> versus Djibouti's existing and maximally possible capacity as could, at that time, be foreseen and expected.

The juridical evolution of the process is disturbing, however. WFP initiated works in the Port of Djibouti, at a time when negotiations between Djibouti and Dubai were already under way. On May 8, Djibouti signed a MOU with Dubai. As a result, Djibouti's authority in signing a contract with WFP becomes questionable. On May 20, WFP and Djibouti signed a contract. Two days later, Djibouti signed with Dubai.

The Port Operations Manager stated that Djibouti had the full right to sign all these contracts. It may be, but it remains questionable, if not doubtful. Either Djibouti had the right to commit Dubai, in which case the increase of the discharge rate should have been objected to, as well as the implications of the Midrock project. Or Djibouti had no such right any more.<sup>51</sup> WFP staff waive this juridical argument on the grounds that a rate of US\$2.85 per ton is still very low. They have a point, but it does not change the legal side of the matter.

The contract, as shown to the mission, has all the characteristics of a *pactum leoninis*, where one party commits itself, and the other party benefits, without any counterpart obligations. WFP did all the work, but the port benefited and agreed not to increase its rates (but did increase them anyway). On top of this, at the end, the port "feels frustrated"<sup>52</sup> that WFP did not install the weighbridges. A similarity with the operations on road rehabilitation comes to mind, where the Government of Djibouti charged WFP US\$15 per truck, despite the road works.

WFP staff object to these remarks by highlighting all the advantages the Port of Djibouti offers to WFP: priority berthing and handling, no storage fees, surface free of charge and installation of offices.

It cannot be contested that the creation of the open surface on berth 13 has significantly increased the discharge possibilities, with bagging and transshipment alongside. Truck manoeuvring<sup>53</sup> improved dramatically and eight trucks can now be loaded at the same time. If indeed the bagging machines can reach 40 tons per hour<sup>54</sup>, the daily optimal discharge tonnage would be some 3,800 tons per quay, which is more than the ship's obligations as per charter-party<sup>55</sup>. Purely theoretically, the new berth 13 configuration, hence, could assure 115,000 tons per month.<sup>56</sup>

In the old constellation, the same ship would, in the best conditions, manage 3 bagging machines, which would mean 2,880 tons per day, provided no time is lost with truck manoeuvring alongside ship. As that proviso cannot be counted upon, it is safer to calculate a discharge rate of 3 bagging machines with an idle time of 15 minutes per truck<sup>57</sup> or per 40 T, hence  $3 \times 40 \times 24 \text{ hours} - 25\% = 2,160$  tons per day. As one of the bagging machines, on the stem of the ship, can take two conveyor belts, the total tonnage could be slightly more, say 2,300 tons. This would mean a maximum 69,000 tons per month, and only in the absolute best circumstances, with no accidents, with trucks manoeuvring speedily, with ships following each other without any loss of time while shifting berths.

Ships and ports do not fit into theoretical calculations with daily averages. Putting oneself in the shoes of WFP staff at that time, given the closure of Assab and Massawa, the increased food requirements, the

<sup>50</sup> see the background as described in the project proposal

<sup>51</sup> which is more likely

<sup>52</sup> quoted verbatim from the Port Operations Manager in his interview

<sup>53</sup> according to the Port General Manager, truck parking and truck manoeuvring is one of Djibouti's main problems, with one fatal accident every week

<sup>54</sup> that means without any hiccup

<sup>55</sup> 2,400 tons

<sup>56</sup> of course, this is only theory, for ships movements do not concord

<sup>57</sup> an absolute minimum



cargo to be expected, the port's capacity, the port's other activities and ships' arrivals, the decision to increase Djibouti's capacity was the right one.

The necessity of the construction of an additional 5,500 tons capacity semi-permanent warehouse, on top of the existing one of 6,000 tons capacity and of warehouses rented in town with 16,000 tons capacity<sup>58</sup>, could, with hindsight, be questioned. Indeed, it is now known that 98% of the cargo was directly transhipped onto lorries. At the time of the decision, such a direct transshipment was not guaranteed, however. The availability of trucks and the turnaround time of trucks on the Djibouti roads were, at the time of the decision, unknown factors and it was wise to assume these factors could have been negative. The total cost of the semi-permanent warehouse was not so significant relative to the volume and value of the cargo involved.

The real costs did not turn out to be as estimated.

	Budget estimate (US\$)	Contract value (US\$)	Actually paid (US\$)
tearing down and surfacing	1,320,000	549,000	476,000
Wiikhall surface preparation	130,000	397,000	385,000
warehouse itself	220,000		direct delivery by Norway, value 141,000

The discrepancy between estimated and actual figures was already known to WFP in a budget control document dated June 3, 2000<sup>59</sup>.

There was, hence, no funding shortfall with the berth and the warehouse works combined.

The weigh bridges component was not funded, and was abandoned. Despite the Djibouti Port's frustration about this, the necessity of weighbridges remains questionable, as the bagging machines are already calibrated.

While there does not seem to be a hard calculation of the cost-effectiveness per ton, or of realised savings per month, or per operation, cost-effectiveness can be inferred, with direct transshipment guaranteed, and shunting & handling costs having gone down from US\$23 to US\$17 per ton. The operation also avoided ships' demurrage costs. Although the argument of having avoided demurrage is an argument based upon an assumption, the assumption can, in this case, be accepted, based upon parallelism with situations in other ports. It seems that the berth 13 operation did not entirely avoid demurrage, but it is safe to assume that demurrage would have been higher without the operation.

### Systematic answer to the questions quoted in the terms of reference

#### Main questions

- *Was the operation justified?*

The operation was perfectly justified, both at the time the decision was taken and even now, with hindsight.

- *Was the operation well planned?*

<sup>58</sup> cancelled in April 2001

<sup>59</sup> document that appeared in WFP Djibouti files



It seems that the operation took quite a while before taking off. Nevertheless, the operation was well planned, for the works were finished just before the estimated peak cargo arrivals started.

- *Was the operation well processed?*

Save some concerns regarding the legal aspects of the contract, the operation was well processed.

### **Detailed questions**

- *Were the needs correctly assessed?*

The cargo flow increase estimate was very precise, the timing estimate as well. Considering all aspects of the situation as they were known at that time, the assessment was correct.

- *Were the project objectives well defined, was the project well designed and prepared, and to what extent were the goals, objectives and indicators of the operation appropriate, adequate, relevant, valid and inter-linked with those of the underlying EMOP or PRRO?*

The objectives were well defined, the project well designed and well prepared. The objectives were relevant and adequate. The validity of the weigh bridges objective is questionable. The indicators as they were at that time were correctly read and interpreted. Inter-linkage with the different underlying relief operations was obvious.

- *Was the budget correctly assessed? Were the required resources adequately identified? Was there any budget shortfall and were there any implications of such a shortfall?*

The budget was overestimated. Compared to the value of the underlying operation, the discrepancy is not a significant issue. There was no shortfall on the quay works and on the warehouse combined. The weighbridges were not supplied due to the absence of funding, but this shortfall and the non-realisation of the weighbridge component had no repercussion on the operation or the underlying operation(s).

- *Did the operation reach its objectives and those of the underlying operation? How effective was the implementation of the operation?*

The operation was effectively implemented. It reached its objectives.

- *Was the operation timely planned and timely implemented?*

The operation was well timed and implemented accordingly, even considering a delay in take-off.

- *How was the level of co-ordination with partners? How effective was the partnership?*

For somebody looking at it from the outside and with hindsight, the partner – the Port of Djibouti – benefited from the operation somewhat unilaterally, as the contract appeared rather one-sided. The mission has also its reservations about whether the Port of Djibouti kept WFP fully informed on what was going on with the Port of Dubai and with Cheikh Al Amoudi.

- *How was the level of co-ordination between the CO and the OTL regarding planning, implementing and monitoring?*

It seems that the operation was jointly assessed and discussed between CO and OTL. The contract with the Government was signed by OTL. Most of the work was done by the CO and OTL was kept systematically informed. Questions remain as to why OTL and or CO did not object when the Port of Djibouti increased its rates notwithstanding the contract, and whether anything more could be



done should the Midrock project be implemented to the detriment of the semi-permanent WFP warehouse.

- *How relevant were monitoring and reporting?*

Both monitoring and reporting seem to have been well carried out.

- *Was the staff of the CO adequate and up to the task?*

The staff performed very well and made the operation a success.

- *Were there any positive or negative interfering factors or constraints?*

Constraints appeared with the analysis of the soil under berth 13 after tearing down the warehouse. These constraints were adequately dealt with. Further constraints were the emergence of the Midrock project, which may result either in moving the WFP semi-permanent warehouse or in displacing the entrance doors of the old warehouse from the north side to the south side. In this eventuality, traffic problems may occur in the 30-meter strip between the two warehouses. A positive factor, according to WFP staff, was the easiness in the relations with the Port Authorities.

- *Was the operation cost-effective?*

Although there is no hard cost-effectiveness calculation at hand, it can be affirmed that the operation was cost-effective, given the relatively modest budget and the appreciable outputs and outcomes.

- *Has the operation brought lasting and sustainable assets and to whose benefit?*

Djibouti Port has benefited from a modernisation of berth 13 and other surfacing. Of course WFP benefited also. So will be other users of berth 13 and possible later users of the surface where WFP has now its semi-permanent store.

- *How was the communication and co-ordination with donors?*

Based upon the information at hand, the communication with donors was well maintained.

## **SO 6243 – Djibouti: works on National Road 1**

### **Narrative**

For the same reasons as those that brought WFP to increase Djibouti port's capacity, WFP had to reckon with the necessity of forwarding increased discharged cargo flow from Djibouti to Ethiopia in time. In early 2000, WFP studied various options. There was no abundance of choices. A road engineer of the Schweizerisches Katastrophenhilfe Korps was mandated to assess.

In an internal document dated April 30, 2000, WFP reviewed the possible alternatives of different options to increase the off-take from the port. WFP chose to improve National Road 1, as this road was the nearest route to the main destinations in Ethiopia. The choice was considered to offer the best result at the least cost. Delays in funding meant that the works start in August 2000.

While the initial idea was the rehabilitation of the entire road, a World Bank project made WFP shift the scope of its objectives, taking into consideration the World Bank plans. While the World Bank project was supposed to start in October 2000, delay after delay occurred. Meanwhile the relief cargo arrived in Djibouti. WFP could not wait for the World Bank and initiated the implementation of its project, not so much as the initially planned general road construction, but more as a rehabilitation project, keeping in



mind the larger World Bank project, as well as the amount of contributions received. WFP's operation was scheduled for completion in July 2001, while the World Bank project was, finally, expected to start in August 2001.

According to documents, the project was initially budgeted at US\$4.1 million. Donations from the USA and from Switzerland totalled US\$2.1 million. The contracted sum was US\$1.31 million.

## Comments

In choosing to upgrade National Road 1 as the main artery towards Ethiopia, WFP made the most obvious and logical choice.

In April 2000, the Djibouti Ministry of Transport and Equipment requested WFP to assess an alternate route from Djibouti via Hol-Hol and Guelile to Dire Dawa. The Ministry invited WFP to divert any available funds for the upgrading of this alternative road. The reasoning of the Djibouti Ministry was that the WFP special operation would duplicate the World Bank project. It is fortunate that WFP initiated the National Road 1 works, since the World Bank project experienced many delays, while the traffic increased to up to 1,000 heavy trucks per day on National Road 1.

The alternate route via Hol-Hol, however, requires a comment. During the field visit, WFP Djibouti referred to an assessment report issued by a previous SKH engineer, according to which the Hol-Hol road would be impracticable.

From a mission team member's personal experience, the Hol-Hol route was used for several years by WTOE trucks. While the situation may have changed since then<sup>60</sup>, there is doubt that this road has not changed that much and the gradients not increased (which were allegedly the reasons provided by the SKH engineer for not considering the use of this route). Without prejudice to the choice of National Road 1 as being the best solution, a new feasibility study of the Hol-Hol alternative route is recommended. The Hol-Hol alternative route would offer a shorter route to the Ogaden region and peripheral theatres of WFP operations.

The contract signed between WFP and the Government of Djibouti does not match the objectives of the operation proposal. The latter speaks of rehabilitation of National Road 1. The former speaks of road maintenance, which is a big difference. The initial plan was road rehabilitation but, due to time and funding constraints, and also considering the World Bank project to come, WFP shifted from rehabilitation to maintenance. This change of plan was not clearly documented.

## Systematic answers to the questions quoted in the Terms of Reference

### Main questions

- *Was the operation justified?*

Considering the requirements of forwarding a very important increase of relief food from Djibouti, the high traffic increase foreseen, the condition of the road, the requirements for enhanced turnaround time and the importance of the freight, the operation was no doubt justified.

- *Was the operation well planned?*

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<sup>60</sup> 1993





The operation was well planned. Circumstances beyond WFP's authority altered not only the planning but also the essence of the operation, in that it was scaled down from rehabilitation to maintenance.

- *Was the operation well processed?*

The operation could have been better processed if the Government of Djibouti had not put pressure on WFP to have the Department of Public Works (formerly an independent Ministry but now under the Ministry of Equipment and Transport) to act as master of the works. The management by the Department was not very efficient. Fuel, spare tires and spare parts were often lacking. Labourers were not paid for long periods of time, which resulted in strikes or go-slows. In May 2001, salaries were seven months in arrears. Had it not been for the excellent and devoted work of the SKH engineer, the operation may have faced serious management problems.

### **Detailed questions**

- *Were the needs correctly assessed?*

By assessing the need of assuring a high increase of up to 1,000 trucks *per day* for forwarding the cargo discharged in Djibouti, and by choosing an immediate upgrading of National Road 1, WFP's assessment and grasp of the situation was correct.

- *Were the project objectives well defined, was the project well designed and prepared, and to what extent were the goals, objectives and indicators of the operation appropriate, adequate, relevant, valid and inter-linked with those of the underlying EMOP or PRRO?*

That the operation was straightforward, the objectives simple, the connection with the underlying operation evident, and the work easy to conceive, does not diminish the fact that the objectives were adequate, the goals appropriate, the conception of the operation valid and the indicators correctly read. The linkage with the underlying EMOP was obvious.

- *Was the budget correctly assessed? Were the required resources adequately identified? Was there any budget shortfall and were there any implications of such a shortfall?*

As with most roadwork projects, the actual funding decides what can be done: from simple pothole repairs and maintenance to rehabilitation and through to reconstruction. National Road 1 needs at least rehabilitation, preferably a complete overhaul. The budget was some US\$4,149,000, the actual funding US\$1,310,000. Consequently, the operation was scaled down to only maintenance. A funding of US\$4 million would have resulted in much more extensive repairs and, perhaps, even a complete rehabilitation.

- *Did the operation achieve its objectives? How effective was the implementation of the operation?*

Although the operation is not finalised (it will be by the end of July 2001, when the World Bank is due to start work on the section from Dikhil to Galaffi and will take over the maintenance from WFP), the objectives have been attained. Trucks now need only about five hours from Djibouti to the border compared to fifteen hours before the operation started.

- *Was the operation timely planned and timely implemented?*

The operation was timely planned so as to be ready by the time the increased traffic was due. There was a delay in the launch: the contract was signed in Djibouti on May 22, 2001 and the work began



in August. Other delays occurred in the process, but did not jeopardise either the operation itself or the underlying operation.

- *How was co-ordination with partners?*

The co-ordination with the Department of Public Works was as good as anticipated. The Department of Public Works did its best, although this was not always good enough. The fact that the Ministry of Equipment kept the money received from WFP, and the Department of Public Works had to use the money, did not help and resulted in the difficulties described above. The question can also be asked whether WFP should not have taken a firmer stand with the Government, which benefited directly from the WFP SO. The Government banked the funds, paid salaries late, and continued levying US\$15 per truck for use of the road.

- *How effective and relevant was the monitoring and reporting?*

A better monitoring, like the one performed daily by the SKH engineer cannot be asked for. Accurate and comprehensive reporting was done fortnightly to Addis Ababa and from there to Rome.

- *Was the staffing of the CO adequate and up to the task?*

The staffing was adequate and well up to the task.

- *Were there any positive or negative interfering factors?*

Djibouti is already a difficult working environment. The evaluation mission wonders whether WFP should not have tried to more directly influence the Government and to act with them on a payment against performance base, or at least have kept a more direct control on the supply of fuel, spares and tires.

- *Was the operation cost-effective?*

With trip duration reduced from fifteen to five hours, with savings on freight varying between US\$4 and 10 per ton, depending upon destination, cost-effectiveness was a fact, even if a hard calculation of a final figure of actual realised savings is not at hand. If WFP had had a more direct control of the financing and implementation of the operation, cost-effectiveness would probably have been higher.

- *Has the operation brought any lasting and sustainable assets and to whose benefit?*

Continuous maintenance of National Road 1, that carries 1,000 heavy trucks per day, is a necessity. Even a complete reconstruction would not last very long without proper maintenance. Of particular concern are the river crossings with "Irish bridges". Another important factor is the width of the road. If the road is not large enough for two heavy vehicles to cross without having to drive out on the shoulders of the road, these shoulders will rapidly deteriorate and may cause accidents. A negative factor resides in the fact that road improvement permits higher speed, which inevitably results in fatal accidents, as was already the case.

All users of National Road 1, including WFP, other operators, the Government of Djibouti and the civilians benefited from the operation.

- *How were the co-ordination and the communication with donors?*

Co-ordination with the Swiss Government, which delegated its engineers, was very good. Regarding the United States, it was understood that they have sent staff to study the work in progress. Co-ordination with the World Bank is equally good.



- *How was the level of co-ordination between the CO and OTL regarding planning, implementing and monitoring?*

The contract was signed between OTL and the Government of Djibouti. The Country Office and OTL were in agreement over the conception, planning and implementation of the project. The CO followed the daily implementation of the operation.

## **S.O. 6248 – Logistics co-ordination unit for the Horn of Africa drought emergency**

### **Narrative**

As seen above, several SOs were designed to handle the expected increase of food aid for Ethiopia through Djibouti and/or Berbera from mid 2000. WFP were of the opinion that such an increase would require enhanced co-ordination, and that such co-ordination, considering the importance of the anticipated volume of cargo, would be best achieved through a special logistics co-ordinating unit. Thus, a proposal was submitted, with a provision for one P5, two P4, one P3 and one P2 staff for a period of eight months, starting in May 2000.

Due to various circumstances, important among which was the delay in obtaining partial funding of the US\$782,000 budget, as well as recruitment problems, the setting up of the unit was overtaken by events. In the end, logistics was co-ordinated through existing means, channels and staff. In fact, the unit never became fully operational.

### **Comments**

Relief for Ethiopia via Djibouti and/or Berbera was foreseen to become a very complex logistics operation in which WFP staff had to consider, among other things:

- a serious increase in tonnage;
- increased distances between the ports of entry and the final destinations
- uncertainty regarding the forwarding capacity from the ports of Djibouti and Berbera
- the discharge capacity of the ports of Djibouti and Berbera
- the high number of ships arrivals at these ports and the danger of congestion.

It was quite understandable that, at the time these threats of bottlenecks appeared, donors and WFP alike began worrying about congestion, delays, demurrage, losses, food pipeline breaks and other logistics nightmares. While competent WFP staff was already on the spot, the idea of having a crisis co-ordinating unit was understandable. With hindsight, however, and after the logistics unit had not been fully established and the regular staff had coped with the increase, it is easy to say that maybe the unit was not needed. Still today, however, staff are of the opinion that the co-ordinating unit, if it had continued to operate, would have saved demurrage and other expenses. Although understandable in its concept, the proposed size of the special unit looked overstaffed in number and in rank.

## **Systematic answer to the questions quoted in the terms of reference**

### **Main questions**

- *Was the operation justified?*

With hindsight, it could be argued that the operation was not really justified. At the moment of its conception, the idea was justifiable. It is fair to say that the project was valid, but that the plan was overtaken by events, in part due to slow resourcing and staffing problems.



- *Was the operation well planned?*

The operation did not require much planning; planning consisted of recruiting additional staff for a special temporary unit.

- *Was the operation well processed?*

The setting-up of the unit was overtaken by events.

#### **Detailed questions**

- *Were the needs correctly assessed?*

While the basic requirement for a crisis unit could be defended at that time, the volume of the estimated required inputs (staff and rank) seem to have been over-assessed.

- *Were the project objectives well defined, was the project well designed and prepared, and to what extent were the goals, objectives and indicators of the operation appropriate, relevant, adequate, valid and inter-linked with those of the underlying EMOP or PRRO?*

The objectives were valid and well defined: ensuring co-ordination of the high tonnage flow that was likely to create congestion and bottlenecks. These objectives were directly in line with the underlying operations. Probably, the project was over-designed, the staffing needs identified being too high for the actual requirements.

- *Was the budget correctly assessed? Were the required resources adequately identified? Was there any budget shortfall and were there any implications on such a shortfall?*

The identification of required resources looks over estimated: was there really a call for five expatriate staff, including a P5 Senior Logistics Officer? The budget was only covered to about 50% and the operation consequently did not fully take off. While the logistics management of the increased cargo flow was handled anyhow, it was affirmed by some WFP staff that demurrage charges and increased expenditure occurred due to the absence of the co-ordination unit.

- *Did the operation achieve its objectives and or those of the underlying operation? How effective was the implementation of the operation?*

The operation was not implemented as originally planned and, hence, did not achieve its objectives.

- *Was the operation timely planned and timely implemented?*

The operation was timely planned, but not timely implemented, due to funding and recruiting obstacles.

- *How was the level of co-ordination with partners? How effective was the partnership?*

Not applicable.

- *How was the level of co-ordination between the CO and the OTL regarding planning, implementing and monitoring?*

Not applicable



- *How effective were monitoring and reporting?*

Not applicable

- *Was the staff of the CO adequate and up to the task?*

The existing staff of the CO were up to the task and managed the increased workload with competence.

- *Were there any positive or negative interfering factors or constraints?*

Had the operation been implemented, the location of the unit in Addis and its geographical distance from Djibouti and Berbera may have been a constraint.

- *Was the operation cost-effective?*

The operation not having been implemented as planned, the question becomes rhetorical. WFP staff believe that, had the unit been implemented as planned, demurrage and other costs could have been avoided.

- *Has the operation brought lasting and sustainable assets and to whose benefit?*

Not applicable.

- *How was the co-ordination and the communication with donors?*

Not applicable.

## **SO 6247 – Ethiopia: light aircraft**

### **Narrative**

For reasons well explained in the operation proposal dated May 2000, WFP decided on the use of two light aircraft and one helicopter for transport of staff of the humanitarian community, for transport of WFP monitors and for small scale cargo transport. Initially foreseen to last eight months, from May to December 2000, the operation was still going on at the time of the mission's visit.

One helicopter was brought over from Mozambique. It proved to be unsuitable and was replaced by a helicopter donated by ECHO. The helicopter is used sporadically, mainly for reconnoitring and preparation / identification of airstrips. In April 2001, it stood idle for 17 days<sup>61</sup>, versus an estimated use of 80 hours per month.

At present, light aircraft are used for 70 flying hours per month, mainly for monitoring, while initially targeted for 80 to 100 hours per month. Transport of non-WFP staff is free of charge.

### **Comments**

In a country like Ethiopia, considering the distances and the security situation, air transport can be endorsed. It also increases monitoring possibilities. This does not mean that some questions do not arise as to the adequacy of the means in use and as to the use of these means.

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<sup>61</sup> at 1.000 \$ per day



Although appreciated by partners, particularly NGOs, helicopters are expensive and may not be suited to all situations. In fact, the helicopter was standing idle for many days per month. The helicopter appeared to the evaluation mission to be an expensive and discretionary tool.

The mission also questioned why the aircraft are free of charge to non-WFP users. Although no in-depth survey was conducted in this particular operation, previous experience in other theatres of operations has shown that, when an airfare is charged, the request for air transport diminishes. This may be an indication that not all air transport is necessary and that users would be more discriminating if they had to pay for the services themselves.

It was understood from staff interviews that the request for monitoring by air is originated by programme officers, and that the air unit at logistics provides services upon request. If so, consideration should be given to assessing jointly the use of air monitoring and its cost implications by programme officers and air unit staff, so optimising a rational use of aircraft.

### **Systematic answer of questions quoted in the Terms of Reference.**

#### **Main questions**

- *Was the operation justified?*

In order to avoid security problems, and in order to increase monitoring quality, the operation was justified.

- *Was the operation well planned?*

The operation was well planned.

- *Was the operation well processed?*

With the exception of the use of the helicopter, the operation was well processed.

#### **Detailed questions**

- *Were the needs correctly assessed?*

The needs were correctly assessed, in that the long distances and the security risks required air transport.

- *Were the project objectives well defined, was the project well designed and prepared, and to what extent were the goals, objectives and indicators of the operation appropriate, adequate, relevant, valid and inter-linked with those of the underlying EMOP or PRRO?*

The objectives: to bring people safely from far distances, were well defined, and quite relevant and appropriate, as well as directly in line with the underlying operations. Exception should be made for the helicopter, which was a choice that must have resulted from an erroneous reading of indicators such as the insistence of guest users. In including a helicopter at an estimated use of 80 hours per month, the project was, in this respect, well less designed.

- *Was the budget correctly assessed? Were the required resources adequately identified? Was there any budget shortfall and were there any implications of such a shortfall?*



The budget seems to have been correctly assessed, and there does not seem to be any shortfall. The choice of a helicopter in general, and of a MI-8 in particular, was not optimal.

- *Did the operation achieve its objectives and or those of the underlying operation? How effective was the implementation of the operation?*

The operation was (is) very effective and has achieved its objectives.

- *Was the operation timely planned and timely implemented?*

The operation was timely planned, and implemented accordingly.

- *How was the level of co-ordination with partners? How effective was the partnership?*

Co-operation with the Ethiopian Government seems good. Co-operation with partners is, in fact, not much more than transporting them, in the limited context of this SO.

- *How was the level of co-ordination between the CO and OTL regarding planning, implementing and monitoring?*

Planning, implementing and monitoring were, above all, done at the field level and co-ordination with OTL was limited.

- *How effective and relevant were monitoring and reporting?*

Both monitoring (in as far as one can monitor an air operation) and reporting seem to have been effective.

- *Was the staff of the CO adequate and up to the task?*

The CO logistics staff are professionally competent.

- *Were there any positive or negative interfering factors or constraints?*

If there were any, they were not obvious, and were not brought to our attention.

- *Was the operation cost-effective?*

Regarding the helicopter, the operation was certainly not cost-effective. Regarding the aircraft, it would not be fair to speak of cost-effectiveness, in as far as air transport may have avoided casualties, which is not known, and can only be assumed. Excluding this factor, and concentrating solely on passenger and cargo transport, a cost-effectiveness calculation does not seem to have ever been performed. Anyhow, there is, in the evaluation mission's opinion, no reason why the users of the air transport service should not be charged.

- *Has the operation brought lasting and sustainable assets and to whose benefit?*

Not applicable

- *How was the co-ordination and the communication with donors?*

Communication and co-ordination with donors in Addis Adaba seems to be very good.



## **SO 6277 – Kenya: emergency road and river crossing repairs**

### **Narrative**

The Kenya drought EMOP 6203.01 provides for the distribution of 35,000 tons of relief food per month. The districts especially affected by the drought are located in the northern and the north-eastern parts of Kenya. Roads in these areas are poor<sup>62</sup>. As if the normal battering during the recurrent rainy seasons was not enough, the El Niño climatic phenomenon contributed to further flooding and destruction.

The operation was approved on July 26, 2000, with a budget estimated at US\$2.3 million. By December 2000, no funding had been forthcoming. A loan of US\$600,000 from the WFP Immediate Response Account (IRA) was applied for, in order to carry out most urgent emergency repairs, together with a request for an extension in time until June 30, 2001. In the end, only basic repairs were carried out with limited local funds, in order to avoid a complete halt of road transport and consequent reversion to airlifts.

### **Comments**

Although the operation was never implemented, and could, hence, not be evaluated as such, the mission was of the opinion that this operation<sup>63</sup>, as it was conceived, proposed and approved, was interesting for several reasons. The roads of the concerned areas, like so many other roads in Kenya and in other parts of the world where WFP are operating, are basically and permanently bad. Rainy seasons are a well-known recurrent phenomenon. While conceiving EMOP 6203, WFP knew that they would face road transport difficulties. When extending EMOP 6203 in 6203.01, WFP could not have been taken by surprise when confronted with roads which were little more than bush tracks.

Hence, opting for a special operation should be questioned, as the transport of food foreseen by the underlying operation automatically included the use of these roads, of which WFP knew in advance that they would become impracticable, and would become impracticable again with the next rainy season. Donors were not eager to fund US\$2.3 million for an operation in which, as said in the project proposal, the return over investment would not be reached in less than three years. It was questionable whether the results of the road works would be sustainable for three years or more.

Roadworks in these parts of Africa are a matter of how much WFP should do. In this case WFP:

- conceived an operation amounting to US\$2.3 million for non-permanent repairs
- while the condition of the roads was known and foreseeable
- and the food was delivered anyway through small-scale repairs financed with limited local funds

This illustrates to the mission that this operation should not have been established, but that the logistics component of the underlying EMOP should have been adapted to cover pot-hole filling and basic maintenance, with minimal increase of the LTSH.

## **SO 6282 – Kenya: Garissa- Dadaab road rehabilitation project**

### **Narrative**

WFP has been providing assistance to Somali and Sudanese refugees in Kenya through PRRO 4961.04 since 1991. At the time the special operation was submitted for approval, on July 10, 2000, assistance to

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<sup>62</sup> an euphemism

<sup>63</sup> as well as the Garissa-Dadaab one, to follow





these refugees was expected to continue for an additional three years. Therefore, WFP had EMOP 6226 approved in May 2000.

The refugees are located in two main camps: Kakuma (83,372 refugees) in Turkana district, and Dadaab (124,757 refugees) in Garissa district. The deliveries to Dadaab camp amount to some 2,000 tons per month. Dadaab camp is normally supplied over the Mombasa – Malindi – Garissa route or over the (much longer) Mombasa – Nairobi – Garissa route. Due to the El Niño climatic phenomenon, some sections of the road Garissa – Dadaab road flushed away. Food was delivered by air. For the last two rainy seasons, WFP supplied Dadaab by using a costly transshipment at Garissa. Both times, WFP came close to having to resort to airlifts.

On July 10, 2000, WFP decided that the Garissa – Dadaab road should be rehabilitated at a cost of US\$1,344,000. The operation would last for one year. ROI would be reached in two to three years. Funding was not obtained, however, and the operation did not take place.

## Comments

Anyone familiar with the region will know that supplying Dadaab will always remain very difficult, very costly and sometimes impossible, save by air. El Niño cannot be called an unforeseen or exceptional event. Even without the El Niño climatic phenomenon, it is most likely there would have been flood problems. Besides, El Niño happened in 1997.<sup>64</sup>

The Dadaab theatre is an illustration of a situation in which all constraints and difficulties were known in advance, previously experienced and repeated. In this kind of situation WFP should pre-position food before the rains come, to the extent to which resources and an adequate food pipeline permit such pre-positioning.

## SO 6036 - Southern Sudan emergency assistance to war victims

### Narrative

In 1998, emergency food requirements in southern Sudan drastically increased as a result of a widespread drought. Food supplies climbed, between May 1998 and May 1999, from 83,000 tons to 129,000 tons. Understandably, the crisis stretched logistics infrastructure capacities to their limits. Lokichocchio airfield could not accommodate all the aircraft required for airlifting 12,000 tons per month, without taking flight safety risks. As Lokichocchio airfield was not equipped for night traffic, airlifts were confined to daylight hours. Overland transport had to complement airlifts and airdrops. For Eastern Equatoria road transport proved to be the only way, following a flight ban decreed by the Government of Sudan. Road transport was difficult due to road conditions. The main artery Lokichocchio – Lodwar was close to impracticable.

Faced with tremendous difficulties, WFP launched a huge multifaceted operation<sup>65</sup>, estimated at US\$11.2 million. The operation contained eight components:

- roads and bridges repair in Western Equatoria
- roads and bridges repair in Eastern Equatoria
- roads repair and maintenance on the Lodwar - Lokichocchio trunk road
- development of support infrastructure at Eldoret airfield

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<sup>64</sup> according to the proposal for operation 6277 - Kenya roads - El Niño happened in 1998

<sup>65</sup> categorised as infrastructure



- additional air transport capacity for Eldoret airfield
- Lokichocchio airstrip upgrading
- air traffic control package for Lokichocchio airfield.
- provision of a dedicated truck fleet.

Components 1, 2 and 3 aimed at ensuring access to beneficiaries throughout the year over the two main road corridors into southern Sudan. Better accessibility for commercial trucking into Sudan and, hence, reduced freight rates, were part of the objectives. Components 4 and 5 focused on increasing air operations capacity into southern Sudan from Eldoret airfield. Components 6 and 7 were inspired by concerns about safety at an increasingly busy Lokichocchio airfield. With component 8 a reliable and sufficient transport fleet was envisaged, reducing the need for airlifts and air drops.

A first phase of the special operation covered the period from January to December 1999. The operation was extended twice, six months each time, so as to complete the road works in both Eastern and Western Equatoria.

For various reasons, but mainly due to insufficient funding, components 4 to 8 did not materialise.

### **Comments**

It must have been clear to WFP staff, at the time of conceiving this ambitious operation, that the operation was too complex to be managed as one. In fact, the intended activities could be catalogued into three kinds of operations: a road infrastructure operation, airfield action and a truck fleet management. In the mission's view, it was very ambitious to believe that such a combination could be undertaken and finalised in twelve months time.

The basic reason behind the whole operation was to guarantee continued supply into the two Equatorias, even with a flight ban. The road infrastructure components therefore had priority.

The quality of the recently issued final report covering the period ending December 2000 should be underlined. On the other hand, it must not have been easy, for WFP management, to grasp what has been going on in the early periods.

### **Systematic answers to the questions in the Terms of Reference**

#### **Main questions**

- *Was the operation justified?*

The operation must be put into its historical perspective. WFP's intervention in the long-term southern Sudan emergency goes back to 1988. All those who have been involved in southern Sudan know how difficult it has been, ever since 1988, to assure relief in one of earth's most difficult places, with roads in terrible condition and in a state of permanent insecurity. The 1998 drought was an additional challenge and nobody can question the justification of intending to fight a huge crisis with significant resources.

With hindsight, it is easy to state that the components were too many, the operation too complex and the conditions too complicated to have succeeded in full. The setting up of a truck fleet and its management in a terrain like southern Sudan would have been a major operation on its own requiring many specialists and complex logistics support. WFP staff, based upon WFP's long experience in southern Sudan, should have realised the limits of what was feasible.

In the mission's view, this is an example of how difficult a multifaceted operation can be, and how one should avoid multifaceted operations.



- *Was the operation well planned?*

While recognising the difficult working conditions and obstacles inherent to a theatre like southern Sudan (especially regarding road works which became the major part of the operation) it seems that the initial plans and good start were insufficiently backed by further planning, by professional field staff, management systems and monitoring activities.

- *Was the operation well processed?*

The same comments apply. Hindsight permits to say that better professional assistance, in particular regarding tendering and roadwork contracting, would have been welcome and would probably have triggered better and faster results. Unfortunately, WFP does not benefit from an unlimited reserve of highly experienced field staff who are in a position to face extreme hardship (and hazardous) conditions for an unlimited period of time.

### **Detailed questions**

- *Were the needs correctly assessed?*

It is not easy to evaluate whether needs in a situation like in southern Sudan, where even the number of beneficiaries remains unclear, were – and could have been – correctly assessed. However, with a broad experience in the area one would tend to say that it seems that the needs were exaggerated – as they have been at times in the past. Even if the needs were as high as assessed, there should have been a realistic estimate of what was feasible within an acceptable period of time and with reasonable means.

- *Were the project objectives well defined, was the project well designed and prepared, and to what extent were the goals, objectives and indicators of the operation appropriate, adequate, relevant, valid and inter-linked with those of the underlying EMOP or PRRO?*

Southern Sudan is, without doubt, one of the most volatile areas in which WFP is operating. It is very difficult to clearly identify objectives, while objectives do not remain constant. Indicators are influenced by many factors that can easily change in space and in time. Distances, unknown factors and changing circumstances impact on ever-changing objectives and the change of tactics cannot always catch up with the change of circumstances. These caveats considered, one could still say such versatility was not always taken into account, however, and that objectives were set too high and were too static for too long.

- *Was the budget correctly assessed? Were the required resources adequately identified? Was there a budget shortfall and were there any implications of such a shortfall?*

One of the difficulties with multifaceted operations is the calculation of the operational budget. Too many factors are variable, and the interchange of budget lines permits combinations that render budget comparison difficult. On top of that, as explained in the Djibouti National Road 1 evaluation, different budgets can be justified for road works: it depends what one does with the budget. It seems that WFP experienced a shortfall of US\$4 million on the southern Sudan operation, and that this shortfall was imputed on the components 4 to 8. This shortfall did not result into jeopardising components 1 to 3. Whether relief aid as such was jeopardised because Lokichocchio did not receive its airfield package is not evident.

- *Did the operation achieve its objectives and/or those of the underlying operation? How effective was the implementation of the operation?*



Notwithstanding its problems and what could be called some shortcomings, food was delivered in reasonably adequate quantities, although at a very high<sup>66</sup> cost. Insufficiency of staff and of facilities had impacts on the implementation.

- *Was the operation timely planned and timely implemented?*

The implementation took too long and ended up with an eighteen months delay. Initial planning could also have been better, given improved facilities, enhanced intelligence and higher-level staff.

- *How was the level of co-ordination with the partners? How effective was the partnership?*

The air co-operation has usually been very good over the years.

Considering the amount of cargo involved, WFP remained the biggest transporter and other agencies depended almost entirely on WFP, who was a general manager more than a co-ordinator.

- *How was the level of co-ordination between the CO and the OTL regarding planning, implementing and monitoring?*

Questions remain whether the CO insisted with OTL for more staff and facilities. If they did, questions should be asked as to why OTL did not provide them. If the CO did not insist, questions should be asked as to why the CO did not.

- *How effective and relevant were monitoring and reporting?*

Monitoring was insufficient. Again, not enough means and staff played a role. As previously said, the final reporting was very good. Reporting on previous periods was inadequate.

- *Was the staffing of the CO adequate and up to the task?*

Unfortunately, and unlike WFP's general profile, staff was not always up to its task.

- *Were there any positive or negative interfering factors or constraints?*

Negative factors were and are:

- huge areas and distances to be covered
- a harsh climate
- permanent insecurity
- absence of roads or terrible condition of those that do exist
- data on population can only be estimated.

- *Was the operation cost-effective?*

The operation was effective in as far that food arrived, and that starvation was avoided. Cost-effectiveness, unfortunately, cannot be calculated because clear indications of tonnage moved and destinations were not at hand. The final report, despite its being well drafted, should have included actual deliveries per destination, so as to permit a cost-calculation per ton/kilometre.

- *Has the operation brought lasting and sustainable assets and to whose benefit?*

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<sup>66</sup> too high; the evaluation mission would be interested in knowing the cost of the operation calculated per ton delivered; this figure could not be traced



In southern Sudan, road works can never be a sustainable asset. Of course, an amelioration of roads benefits the users of this road, in this case the humanitarian agencies that could widen their areas of operation and allow them to reach the beneficiaries more easily. It even seems that a better road network has triggered an increase in the number of NGOs setting up a base in Western Equatoria. Whether this is always a good thing or not, given the quality of some of these NGOs, remains to be seen.

## 5. THE CONCEPT OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS

The combined desk and field study call for some reflections on the concept of special operations.

Since its initial actions, WFP's priority was to deliver food to beneficiaries in time and in a cost-efficient way. In fulfilment of its mandate, WFP have been performing special logistics interventions for the last twenty years. In fact, these "special" interventions played a major role in the history of WFP: in many cases the food would not have been delivered in time or not delivered at all, were it not for WFP's special operations. Regularly, these special interventions saved considerable amounts of money.

The ability of WFP field staff to identify logistics bottlenecks and to deal with them, as well as headquarters' successful backing of their field staff, has been a major factor in WFP's success as the UN's food aid agency.

During the years, WFP became increasingly the lead agency in logistics, as other agencies turned more and more towards WFP to take on the logistics co-ordination in emergency operations.

In 1996, special operations became a *concept*, a programme category. One of the reasons for this was the need to address funding concerns by donors while logistics costs steadily increased. Many donors were said to favour the funding of higher logistics costs through separate, special operations, rather than through increased LTSH. Better donor funding, however, did not materialise as expected.

In 1999, a procedure was introduced according to which requests for SOs would be screened by the Project Review Committee and would be submitted to the Executive Director or the Assistant Executive Director for approval.

The finding during the field study confirmed the impression that had emerged during the desk study. A significant part of SOs, primarily infrastructure operations, were, are and will remain *foreseeable logistics components* of an underlying EMOP or PRRO and should, hence, remain part of the EMOP or PRRO and not become SOs. Many of the logistics bottlenecks that brought special interventions into being could have been forecast at the start of the underlying relief operation. On other occasions, contingency planning should have been included in logistics plans. *Forward planning* and accurate, detailed assessment of logistics requirements and constraints may have kept the number of SOs lower.

This does not preclude the possibility of some major works, taken on for the benefit of a relief operation, being managed as a separate operation, for they are not linked to one underlying activity. Port infrastructure works, for instance, are at the benefit of many underlying operations, and touch a part of a whole continent.

In the mission's view, only two categories of special operations should be considered:

- infrastructure operations for unforeseeable logistics obstacles; this category could also contain major infrastructure activities that go far beyond the logistics component of an underlying operation, that concern a whole region, a great number of benefiting operations and that can be considered a project in itself, for it will continue to exist for many years after WFP's retreat; examples are the Djibouti port works and the Caucasus railways;



- inter-agency co-ordination operations, such as passenger air services, telecommunications, joint logistics management or co-ordination services.

Multifaceted operations should not be continued, as they tend to become too complicated. They require different expertise, different cost-calculation methods and a much more complicated management. Donors may have difficulties with one of the components of a multifaceted operation and reduce or refuse funding accordingly. An opinion was voiced at the mission's debriefing in Rome, however, according to which multifaceted operations allow more flexibility in the cross-allocation of funds. Such flexibility would not compensate for a more complicated management and may go against the donors' intentions. The southern Sudan complex emergency operation is an example of how such a multifaceted operation could develop and become both over complicated and very difficult to manage.

Again, this would not preclude possible exceptions, like in East Timor. However, when considering East Timor<sup>67</sup>, a question comes up on drawing the line between a multifaceted operation and a comprehensive relief operation. How far does WFP want to become not only a lead agency in transport and logistics, but in comprehensive relief management?

(WFP has done such comprehensive relief management before in its history, however. A primary example is the United Nations Border Relief Operation – UNBRO – which WFP set up and managed for displaced Cambodians along the Thai-Cambodian border, from 1982 to 1987, before handing over the management to other UN agencies in early 1988. A WFP-commissioned comprehensive evaluation of this operation was undertaken in 1986).

Air operations are part of the inter-agency co-ordination. WFP has been assuring such co-ordination, at its partners' request, for more than twenty years, in various disaster reliefs. Over the years, other aspects of such co-ordination, like the setting up of radio networks and the creation of joint co-ordination cells, appeared and were included. They are, indeed, special operations and should remain as such.

Infrastructure operations should be of short duration and, with the exception of the setting up and the management of a truck fleet, should remain a one-time input.

Infrastructure operations can include:

- road works
- repair and/or construction of bridges and culverts
- provision of port and warehouse equipment like forklifts, bagging machines, cranes, stitching machines, weighbridges
- repair of equipment quoted above; provision of spare parts
- provision of vehicles and boats
- provision of spare parts for same; repair and maintenance of same
- repair of railway tracks
- provision of radio systems for improved management of railway operations
- repair or improving airstrips or helicopter pads
- construction or repair of stores and warehouses
- provision or production of pallets
- provision or lease of WFP truck fleets
- provision or repair of railway wagons and/or engines

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<sup>67</sup> or India



- port capacity enhancing
- provision of ferries.

Road works, the most frequent item in the list above, requires some further comments.

WFP has increasingly taken on roadwork projects. It is the mission's opinion that some of the roadwork could have been avoided through forward planning. A cardinal rule in road logistics is to avoid bad roads during the rainy season. Supplying during the rainy season requires four- or six-wheel-drive trucks. The use of such trucks damages the road even further and results not only in higher delivery costs but also in higher repair costs during or after the rainy season. *Pre-positioning food* can, on many occasions, avoid many obstacles. It is recognised, however, that this assumes that resources from donors and the food pipeline are sufficiently adequate to permit such timely pre-positioning of food.

The field study provided the opportunity for the examination of, and the discussion over, a number of roadworks. The outcome of the discussions and observations were combined with the long-term professional experience with WFP of one of the team members. A tendency was noted with WFP to address road obstacles more and more with extensive repairs and full-scale rehabilitation instead of trouble-spot repairs. Rehabilitation<sup>68</sup> can cost millions of dollars, takes a long time and does not always guarantee a long sustainability. Pothole repair is faster and cheaper. The deciding factor must remain how necessary and sufficient, and not how opportune or useful, it is to proceed with repairs. If food delivery is necessary and urgent, and if the road conditions prevent such delivery, then WFP will have to arrange for those sufficient repairs that allows the delivery. Or find another solution.

What was carried out rather poorly, or not at all, when applying for a roadwork operation, was the estimate of how much would be saved on transport costs if the roadworks were carried out. Transport costs should always be provided as "\$ per ton/kilometre". The mission realises that it is not always possible to give an exact estimate but remains of the opinion that it is possible to provide a reasonable estimate. These estimates regularly failed to appear. Equally important is to mention the expected tonnage delivered per individual destination.

Improved reporting quality resulting from the first new procedures issued for special operations, including a reporting format, was already mentioned. Along the same lines, and with some discipline, it should be possible to determine the actual tonnage delivered *per individual destination* and, consequently, the savings obtained. So learned lessons and deductions will, after some time, produce indicators for future roadwork operations on the main question "*how much should be done in each case.*"

A need for better know-how among WFP field staff was identified when it came to road transport operations and related cost-calculations. Quotes in reports like "truck loads", "number of trucks" etc, without specification of the tonnage carried by each unit, was observed. Transport costs cannot be established using such vague notions. One can conclude on a need for training on transport cost-calculation.

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<sup>68</sup> or sometimes full scale road construction, like in Liberia and in Mozambique



# Annexes





## ANNEX 1 - TERMS OF REFERENCE

### FOR THE THEMATIC EVALUATION OF THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS PROGRAMME CATEGORY

#### **Background:**

Special Operations (SO) are a unique programme category within WFP. Unlike other WFP programme categories, there is no food component or beneficiaries. Special Operations are launched in support of an Emergency Operation (EMOP), or a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) to address specific logistical bottlenecks hindering the smooth and effective flow of relief food. They are meant to be short-term, complementary and exceptional interventions. SOs can be grouped into three types:

1. ***infrastructure support:*** the classic SO involves enhancements to infrastructure in order to improve capacity to handle a greater throughput of cargo, such as port or road rehabilitation. Expected outcomes are delivery of envisaged tonnage and potentially reduced transit time and transport costs. The resource requirements of these interventions generally range from \$1 to 4 million.
2. ***air operations:*** they include helicopter/intermittent airlift operations, and passenger air service. Airlift/airdrops operations are only carried out when there is no other viable means of transport of food to the beneficiaries, due either to unavailability of necessary infrastructure or insecurity. Though air transport is costly, the resource requirement is not necessarily large, as these SOs are typically of short duration. Requirements range from \$ 1 to 4 million (passenger air services have different characteristics; they provide an interagency air service, usually to by-pass insecurity along road corridors or to overcome major surface transport constraints).
3. ***“multifaceted” special operations:*** these are SO projects of several components such as the provision of interagency services, infrastructure enhancements, and air operations. These operations are often complementary to a large-scale complex emergency and have comparatively large budgets.

Since 1996, when Special Operations became an official programme category, there has been a proliferation of SOs. This is particularly true for 1999 and 2000. Currently there are 30 active SOs in the WFP project portfolio. SO expenditures have grown from \$18 to 34 million per year.

Several problematic areas have affected the management of SOs and, subsequently, donor reporting. Many of these problems are systemic in nature, e.g. the former corporate information systems (WIS, GLM) were not enhanced to accommodate SOs. In order to address technical issues a Working Group on Special Operations (WGSO) was formed in the last quarter of 1999. Recognising the need for more guidance for SO projects, OT developed an SO section in the Transport Manual and related training, initiated management improvements in air operations, and recently engaged a road engineer to develop guidelines for managing road rehabilitation projects. However, policy guidance, and monitoring materials developed thus far have not been done with the unique nature of SO in mind.

Although there is a growing need for SOs, lack of funding is a major problem, and challenge. Only \$22 million was resourced towards the overall-funding requirement of \$90 million last year (2000). Several factors might have contributed to lack of funding, such as: donors not interested to fund certain types of projects in certain countries; donor concern on the use of the SO funding window as opposed to the EMOP/PRRO programme category, and the inherent weaknesses in the formulation, design, and management of some Sos. Identification and understanding of these factors could help improve the resourcing of this programme category.



**Purpose of the evaluation:**

To date no formal or thematic evaluation has been carried out to assess performance, impact, or results of the SO category. In light of the above, OTL has requested the services of OEDE to conduct a thematic evaluation of the SO programme category. OT and OEDE consider it to be timely that the SO programme category be evaluated, so as to make recommendations for modification and improvement as may be required. The results from this evaluation should help to better understand all aspects of this category and, therefore, better identify the factors that contribute to the funding shortfalls.

The evaluation would also be expected to assist in developing and/or strengthening project appraisal, project objectives, performance indicators, as well as monitoring and reporting systems. The results of this evaluation would ultimately feed into the revised WFP Transport Manual, scheduled for release in the third quarter of 2001.

**Scope of the evaluation:**

The evaluation will review the justification, planning, and processing of the Special Operations (including needs assessment, definition, preparation, objectives, technical requirements, complexity, funding, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and operational environment), taking into account the cost effectiveness i.e. the resources required versus the practical impact achieved.

**Objectives of the evaluation:**

*More specifically the objectives of the evaluation are:*

- to assess the effectiveness of the current SO system and procedures of project identification, design, budgeting, resourcing and implementation at both the headquarters and field levels;
- to evaluate progress towards the achievement of stated/agreed SO goals and objectives; in particular to assess the extent to which the SO programme category have been an effective tool for supporting EMOPs and PRROs;
- to identify factors that have affected, positively and/or negatively the overall implementation of the SO;
- to review key issues for WFP assistance including concerns of donors, sustainable asset creation, coordination with governments, collaboration and joint programming with other UN agencies and NGOs in the country;
- to provide recommendations and lessons for future Sops, as well as the revision of the Transport Manual.

**Key issues to be examined:**

**1. SO concept & design:**

- to what extent are the goals, objectives, and the indicators of the SO appropriate, valid, and inter-linked with the programme (EMOP/PRRO) that it supports ?
- how adequate and effective has the application of participatory approaches and tools been in implementing the first type of the SO projects ?
- how adequate and effective is the current monitoring system, for SO projects, applied by the Country Offices? Is it used to assess progress towards the realisation of goals and objectives of the SO and the EMOP/PRRO which it is supporting?
- are the indicators that were provided for the SO specific, relevant, and measurable? What has been the experience in collecting the data on these indicators?



## **2. Co-ordination and partnership:**

- how is the level of co-ordination and collaboration among various partners (government, U.N. organisations, bilateral donors etc) with regard to identification, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the SO? What partnerships (NGO, etc) exist in the SO context, and how effective are they?

## **3. Operations & implementation issues:**

- what is the level of co-ordination between OTL and the Country Office with regard to identification, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the SO?
- is the staffing and the staffing mix (available expertise) of the WFP CO appropriate/adequate to handle the SO?
- how effective is the implementation process, including timeliness of the SO projects and adequacy and utilisation of inputs ?
- what are the problems/constraints that have affected the implementation of the SO?

## **4. Impact:**

- have the SO been cost-effective and adequately resourced?
- where appropriate, to what extent has the SO encouraged investment and created lasting assets for the benefit of poor, food insecure households ? How sustainable are the assets created by these operations? And who are the beneficiaries of them?

## **5. Special considerations:**

- although a full review of funding constrains and shortfalls will not form part of this current evaluation, funding aspects and concerns of donors will be examined. Consultation will be conducted with RE to establish current funding and donors concerns.

### **Evaluation team and programme:**

The evaluation will be organised and managed by the Office of Evaluation. Two external evaluators will carry out the evaluation; one of them will be the team leader. At least one of the consultants should have a good knowledge of WFP logistics operations.

The evaluation will be carried out in two parts:

**Part one:** desk review of approved SOs since the SO became a programming category in 1996.

**Part two:** will consist of three case studies, one case study on each type of intervention. Two of the proposed case studies would be in Africa where the majority of SOs has been carried out. The third case study would be the Balkans (or East Timor) where WFP implemented the largest multifaceted SO.

The evaluation will take place in April/May, for a duration of six weeks. The first part (desk review) will be for two weeks, followed by one week of consultations, revision of the preliminary findings, and preparation for the case studies field visits. The field visits will be undertaken over three weeks (one week for each case study).

### **Organisation of the mission:**

Role of the team leader: will finalise the methodology and key issues for the evaluation. This will be done in consultation with the OEDE Evaluation Officer. He/she will also clarify the role and input of each team member, including individual requirements for the evaluation summary and final report. The



team leader will assume overall responsibility for the mission, and will synthesise the inputs from all sources in order to produce the necessary outputs.

The team leader is responsible for producing the following outputs :

- debriefing note for presenting the mission's early findings and recommendations at the final debriefing of HQ (OTL);
- evaluation summary report for presentation to the Executive Board;
- final evaluation report.

The team leader will present the team's findings at all debriefings and will ensure that all deadlines are met for the above outputs.

Role of the other team members: to provide technical expertise according to individual skill sets, and to provide written inputs to the evaluation summary and final report under the guidance of the team leader and W.F.P. Evaluation Officer.

Role of the WFP Evaluation Officer: To provide support to the overall evaluation exercise as necessary, which includes liaising between team members, relevant areas of WFP headquarters, and the country office. She/he will also ensure compliance with the intended thrust of the evaluation, and that the necessary logistical support is provided by WFP HQ and by the CO.

**Products of the evaluation:**

- debriefing note for debriefing at HQ (maximum 5 pages);  
*deadline:* at the end of the mission
- evaluation summary report (maximum 5000 words);  
*deadline:* two weeks from the end of the mission
- final evaluation report;  
*deadline:* four weeks from the end of the mission.

All reports will be prepared in English and must be written in conformity with the outlines in Annexes 1 and 2. Draft versions of the evaluation summary report and final report will be reviewed by the OEDE Evaluation Officer prior to being finalised.

The evaluation summary report, technical reports and final evaluation report must be submitted in hardcopy accompanied by an electronic version. If applicable, annexes should also be made available in WFP standard software (i.e. Microsoft package). For ease of processing, the summary report should be submitted as plain, unformatted text only (no paragraph numbering, limited bold, underline, etc.).

The mission is fully responsible for its independent report, which may not necessarily reflect the views of WFP.

The evaluation shall be conducted in conformity with these terms of reference and under the overall guidance of OEDE.



## ANNEX 2 - AGENDA OF THE MISSION

Sunday, April 22	Evening – arrival of Mr. de Hennin in Rome.
Monday, April 23	Introductory meetings of Mr. de Hennin with Ms. Ahmed, Mr. Lopez da Silva and Mr. Kaatrud. Remittance of files with basic documents on S.O. Discussions with Ms. Ahmed. Noticing absence of key staff.
Tuesday, April 24	Desk work. Interview of Ms. Ahmed.
Wednesday, April 25	Study of files. Preparation of evaluation grid. Arrival of Mr. Enqvist late evening. Co-ordination session between the two consultants.
Thursday, April 26	Study of files. Interview of Ms. J. McDonald.
Friday, April 27	Study of files. Meeting with Mr. Wilkinson; discussion on the application of the terms of reference given the constraints. Interview of Mr. Strippoli. Remittance, late afternoon, of files by Finances and by Resources.
Monday, April 30	Interviews of Mr. M. Nilssen, Ms. Ahmed, Ms. McDonald and Mr. Keusters.
Wednesday, May 2	Interview of Mr. Ayelign, Ms. D. Hector, Mr. P. Scott-Bowden, Ms. S. Longford and Ms. J. Neitzel. Remittance of the SWOG report.
Thursday, May 3	Interview of Mrs. M. Ward. Study of documents and files. Preparation of the interim briefing session. Attendance of a PRC meeting.
Friday, May 4	Interview of Mr. T. Due, Mr. Scott-Bowden, Mr. P. Terranera and Mr. C. Nikoi. Interim briefing session with Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Lopez da Silva and Mr. Keusters, Ms. Ahmed being present.
Monday, May 7 – Friday, May 11	Preparation of field trips, securing of visas, change of choices on field trips considering impossibilities of obtaining security clearances, draft of desk study report.
Week-end May 12/13	Travel to Addis Ababa. Temporary closure of Frankfurt airport delays Mr. de Hennin's arrival in Addis Ababa till Monday, May 14. Mr. Enqvist arrives in Addis on May 12.
Monday, May 14 – Thursday, May 17	Interviews in Addis Ababa of Mr. Daoudi, Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Meredith. Securing visas for Djibouti. Travel to Djibouti on May 17. First meetings with Djibouti staff.
Friday, May 18	Study of files at WFP office by Mr. de Hennin. Road assessment by Mr. Enqvist together with Mr. Lejeune.
Saturday, May 19	Visit of Djibouti port; interviews of Djibouti Port Authority; interview of Mrs. C. Ilongo, of Mr. J. Lejeune; securing visas for Ethiopia.
Sunday, May 20	Travel to Addis Ababa; desk work at W.F.P. Addis.
Monday, May 21	Interview of Mr. Daoudi. Mr. Enqvist travels to Nairobi. Securing visa for Mozambique.
Tuesday, May 22	Mr. de Hennin travels via Lusaka and Johannesburg to Maputo. Mr. Enqvist travels to Lokichocchio; interview of Mr. Martinson.
Wednesday and Thursday, May 23/24	Interviews in Maputo of Mr. Schaad and Mr. V. Neto; field assessments. Mr. Enqvist travels through Western Equatoria with Mrs. Van Logchem, Mr. Riley (consulting engineer) and Mr. Muruku.
Friday and Saturday, May 25/26	Travel to Europe for Mr. de Hennin. Mr. Enqvist travels through Eastern Equatoria, returns via Lokichocchio to Nairobi.



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Sunday, May 27	Office work for Mr. Enqvist in Nairobi.
Week May 28 – June 1	Draft executive summary and mission report for Mr. de Hennin. Mr. Enqvist interviews Mr. Baussan, Mr. Martinson, Ms. Barton, Mr. Muruku; office work.
Saturday, June 2	Travel to Rome for both consultants; co-ordination meeting between the two consultants.
Sunday, June 3	De-briefing preparation with Ms. Ahmed.
Monday, June 4	De-briefing session in plenary meeting chaired by Mr. Lopez da Silva, Director/OT, and Mr Lefevre, OIC/OEDE.
Thursday, June 14	Submission of executive summary to OEDE.
Monday, July 2	Submission of final report to OEDE.



### ANNEX 3 - LIST OF INTERVIEWS<sup>69</sup>

- Ms. M. Ahmed, Evaluation Officer
- Mr. R. Lopez da Silva, Director, OT
- Mr. D. Kaatrud, Chief, Logistics Service
- Ms. J. McDonald, Logistics Officer
- Mr. A. Wilkinson, Director OEDE
- Mr. F. Strippoli, Senior Humanitarian Advisor
- Mr. M. Nilsson, Officer FSFA
- Mr. T. Keusters, Chief Logistics Officer
- Mr. A. Ayelign, Logistics Officer
- Ms. D. Hector, Logistics Officer
- Mr. P. Scott-Bowden, Senior Emergency Officer, Chief ALITE
- Ms. S. Longford, Logistics Officer
- Ms. J. Neitzel, JPO
- Ms. M. Ward, Resources Mobilisation Officer
- Mr. T. Due, Chief, Resources Programming Service
- Mr. P. Terranera, Senior Logistics Officer
- Mr. C. Nikoi, Senior Logistics Officer
- Mr. A. Daoudi, Regional Logistics Officer, Addis Ababa
- Mr. J. Atkinson, Logistics Officer, LCU, Addis Ababa
- Mr. H. Meredith, Logistics Officer Addis Ababa
- Mr. M. Maj, WFP, Addis Ababa
- Ms. C. Ilongo, Logistics Officer Djibouti
- Mr. J. Lejeune, Schweizerisches Katastrophenhilfe Korps, Djibouti
- Mr. L. Deruyver, General Manager, Djibouti Port Authority
- Mr. I. Dawaleh, Operations Manager, Djibouti Port Authority
- Mr. D. Schaad, Regional Logistics Officer, Maputo
- Mr. V. Neto, Logistics Officer Maputo
- Mr. B. Martinson, Operations Manager, Lifeline Sudan
- Mr. M. Baussan, Regional Logistics Officer, Horn of Africa Cluster
- Ms. B. Barton, Regional Information Officer
- Mr. T. Mukuru, Project Engineer

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<sup>69</sup> in chronological order