



WFP Yemen
SPECIAL OPERATION SO (200841)

Country:	Yemen
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Logistics & Emergency Telecommunications Augmentation and Coordination to Support Humanitarian Operations in Yemen
Total cost (US\$):	US\$ 20,482,060
Duration:	8 months (25 April 2015 to 31 December 2015)

Executive Summary

WFP, in its role as the lead agency of the Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters, aims to launch this Special Operation (SO) to augment logistics and emergency telecommunications in support of the ongoing WFP Emergency Operation in Yemen as well as to provide the humanitarian community with adequate logistics and ICT capabilities and enhanced coordination mechanisms to deliver relief items to affected populations in Yemen.

Due to the dire security situation, the humanitarian community is facing the challenge of mounting an appropriate response and accessing people in need of assistance. Access to the country by air and sea is proving challenging as the conflict spreads and travel by road between key locations is not safe. The problem of limited logistics services and inadequate infrastructure are compounded by in-country fuel shortages, which disrupt relief operations.

The ongoing conflict has severely damaged the electric-power infrastructure, thus affecting the telecommunications network. Hence there is a need for independent communication networks and coordination between humanitarian organizations and government counterparts. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) will focus on implementing secure telecommunications services to facilitate the work of the humanitarian community.

Project Background

1. In January 2015, WFP, in its role as the lead of the Logistics Clusters, launched the Special Operation 200798 in order to provide the humanitarian community with adequate logistics, including air passenger services (under the purview of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)), fuel provision and enhanced coordination mechanisms to deliver relief items to the affected population in Yemen.
2. Since mid-march 2015, the worsening situation in Yemen has led to extensive displacement of people, damage to infrastructure and telecommunications networks as well as general insecurity. As of 09 April 2015 UNOCHA estimates that 16 million people have been affected by the crisis. Humanitarian needs in Yemen are expected to increase as the security and political situation continue to deteriorate.
3. This SO will replace SO 200798 and reinforce the logistics foundation for a comprehensive humanitarian response, including activities under the ETC which was requested activated by the humanitarian country team on 13 April. The air passenger service component of SO 200798 will be carried out under a separate UNHAS SO.

Project Justification

4. Access to the country by air and sea is proving challenging as the conflict spreads across a greater geographical area, and the variety of armed groups and actors involved means that the humanitarian crisis is anticipated to continue and to intensify over the coming months. International sea and air commercial cargo carriers have temporarily ceased to provide transportation services to Yemen.
5. Factors which are affecting the in-country access and delivery of humanitarian relief items are as follows: (1) Shortages in fuel and price increases are being cited throughout the country. (2) At the same time the security situation is making access to the affected population by humanitarian workers more challenging and hazardous.
6. The fragile nature of the Yemen telecommunications network is also making effective delivery of humanitarian assistance more difficult, whilst access to commercial logistics services, including warehousing and transport, is becoming increasingly unpredictable.
7. In order to enable organisations to respond effectively on the ground, ETC and logistics capacity augmentation is needed to facilitate efficient and effective delivery of humanitarian relief inside the country, and a possible scale up of common logistics and coordination activities in the region.
8. Due to increased security challenges, at the end of March, more than 400 International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) and UN staff were evacuated, posing a number of challenges to the humanitarian response. National staff in Yemen are still operating in spite all the challenges on the ground. There is a need to increase assistance programmes throughout the country. In order to enable organisations to respond effectively on the ground, further logistics capacity augmentation is needed to facilitate efficient and effective delivery of humanitarian relief inside the country, and a scale up of common logistics and coordination activities in the region.
9. WFP, as logistics and telecommunications provider of last resort, will through the Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters continue its coordination, information management, and common services provision, which includes staging areas, over-land transport, shipping services, inter-agency humanitarian convoys, cross-border convoys, strategic fuel storage, fuel, airlifts, warehouse storage, and access to communication services.

Project Objective(s)

10. Provide the humanitarian community with a set of secure and tailored logistical and emergency telecommunication services.
11. Provide logistics services inclusive of surface transportation, humanitarian airlifts, dedicated vessel assets and warehousing to humanitarian organizations responding to the Yemen crisis.
12. Improve inter-agency logistics and emergency telecommunications coordination and information management to support the humanitarian community's response.

Project Implementation

13. Logistics and ETC activities will include:

Coordination and information management

Augmentation of logistics coordination structures will be needed in several locations once further access to the affected population in Yemen is possible. To ensure a timely and efficient emergency logistics response the Logistics Cluster will coordinate the logistics operation based on priorities set by the humanitarian community and the Yemen Government. Furthermore, the Logistics Cluster will provide information management and GIS/mapping services. A dedicated Yemen Operation page will be activated on the Logistics Cluster website to disseminate vital information products to the humanitarian community.

In close cooperation with OCHA, the Logistics Cluster will through civil-military coordination work to negotiate access and secure road convoys. Civil military officers will also be required to ensure negotiation of access and coordination with coalition forces deployed and to ensure deconfliction of cargo at Yemen entry points.

Logistics services on a free to user basis

Staff (both local and international) will need to be recruited, as it is envisioned that the number of requests for transportation will increase steadily, both in country and across borders. In addition, more warehouse space, and more warehouse locations, will need to be secured on behalf of the humanitarian community, both in Yemen and in neighbouring countries. Hubs and staging areas will need to be established in neighbouring countries, such as Djibouti, Salalah and Berbera and will include cargo consolidation equipment, temporary storage facilities, office/living facilities and the associated telecommunications infrastructure as required. The augmented storage capacity will support the unimpeded flow of relief items to Yemen and allow timely forwarding of relief items from entry points, such as airports, thereby avoiding airport congestion. This Special Operation takes into account additional equipment such as mobile storage facilities and necessary surge capacity.

Coastal sea transport:

Access by sea to Yemen is proving to be a challenge with several ports reported to be closed or with limited access. Merchant vessels carrying food are facing important delays and scheduled shipping lines have now reduced or stopped port calls. In addition, it will be more difficult for commercial importers to find ship owners willing to provide vessels. To enable an unimpeded flow of relief items from Staging areas to Yemen, as currently commercial liner services have been suspended, this Special Operation includes a dedicated chartered vessel for an initial three months and a port captain in Djibouti and Hodeidah. Should there be an urgent need the vessel will also be able to call at regional ports between Suez, Dubai and Mombasa. This Special Operation will also include dedicated staff for Shipping in WFP headquarters to ensure capacity to manage the complex shipping operation, including the import of fuel to Yemen.

Strategic air transport:

Timely and predictable delivery of humanitarian supplies is vital for the overall humanitarian response in Yemen. As a consequence of the on-going conflict, commercial cargo carriers have temporarily ceased to provide cargo transportation services to Yemen. Hence, the delivery of humanitarian cargo is severely hampered. To fill the logistical gap, WFP is establishing an air bridge catering for the more urgent deliveries, which will be offered to humanitarian organisations and agencies coordinated by the Logistics Cluster. The air bridge will link staging areas such as Djibouti, and other key locations with destinations within

Yemen to support the humanitarian community with timely airlift capacity to boost the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the affected populations. Appropriate aviation staff will be appointed to manage the air component of the Special Operation Furthermore, this Special Operation makes provision for the transportation of humanitarian cargo by air within the country. The initial duration of the air bridge operation is three months. The timeframe and the level of activity will be reviewed and adjusted as the situation unfolds.

Material Handling Equipment:

The lack of equipment for handling cargo in entry points to Yemen has been identified as a potential key bottleneck and a cause for considerable congestion. This Special Operation includes budget for forklifts and other equipment including weighing scale and pallets for entry points to Yemen.

Road transport:

Due to the on-going conflict, overland transportation encounters a considerable security risk. As a service provider to the Logistics Cluster WFP will provide land transportation to its humanitarian partners if and when needed.

Cargo tracking:

The Logistics Cluster will monitor the transportation of non-food relief cargo on behalf of the humanitarian community. A dedicated cargo tracking officer will be stationed in Amman to provide technical support. In addition remote support, including helpdesk monitoring, will be provided from WFP headquarters.

Provision of fuel

The Logistics Cluster, through WFP has provided fuel services to humanitarian partners in Yemen for a number of years through the cost recovery mechanism. WFP is the only organisation with the ability to access fuel in Yemen, possessing the required infrastructure to distribute fuel to partners. WFP will augment fuel requirements under the existing cost recovery mechanism, ensuring the quality and quantity of fuel meets the needs of humanitarian partners. The anticipated monthly forecast of fuel needs prior to 15 March 2015 was 40,000 liters distributed between four established fuel stations located within WFP premises in Sana'a, Haradh, Aden and Hodeidah. This need is estimated to have grown to 1,000,000 liters per month, including fuel for overland transportation of relief items.

Extra fuel stocks (1,000,000 liters) will be procured under the SO for contingency to support the humanitarian land transport and relief assistance distribution.

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster response.

Given the volatile situation, telecommunications instability poses a challenge for humanitarian operations. With the continuing insecurity throughout the country, emergency telecommunications are essential to support the safety of staff in the field and effective operations for all actors in the emergency. An ETC needs assessment survey was conducted in Yemen from the 3 to 12 March, 2015. The assessment highlights a need for independent communication networks and coordination exercise between humanitarian organizations and government counterparts. In addition to the findings from the needs assessment survey, the current security situation has degraded power towers and communication networks have started to intermittently shut off in certain parts of the country. The ETC will support these needs by coordinating efforts to obtain government permission for importation and use of communication equipment for humanitarian operations.

Project Management

14. The WFP Yemen Country Director will be the Fund Manager for this SO and the WFP Yemen Head of Finance will be the Allotment Manager.
15. The WFP Yemen Head of Logistics will be the overall Project Manager for this SO and responsible for the implementation in coordination with the Logistics Cluster, ETC, Aviation and Shipping:
16. Logistics Cluster Coordination Meetings will be held with UN Agencies, NGOs, and donors in different locations in Yemen, as well as across the region (i.e. Amman and Djibouti), in order to identify and monitor logistics gaps and reach common solutions.
17. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster will host local ETC meetings in different locations in the country and region to share information and plan activities. In addition, monthly global ETC meetings will be hosted with participants from across the humanitarian community.

Risk Management

18. A number of contextual, operational, and programmatic risk factors could impact the successful implementation of this Special Operation. Possible mitigation measures are also included below.

A. Lack of funding due to several Emergency Responses taking place simultaneously

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Close alignment with the 2015 Strategic Response Plan
- Ensure engagement with traditional Yemen SO donors and actively provide inputs in ongoing appeals and donor outreach materials/opportunities.

B. Closure of corridors due to insecurity or political developments, affecting access and cargo deliveries

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Maintenance of standby arrangements for alternative corridors and close coordination with HCT and other relevant authorities to intervene or resolve issues with the appropriate authorities on behalf of the humanitarian community.

C. Demands for common services exceeds current forecasts

This risk will be mitigated through:

- Ability to scale up staffing through rosters and identification of surge capacity;
- Availability of adequate storage facilities and ETC/IT services; and

D. Customs / transit delays for the ETC equipment arrival that might delay planned ETC work and shift the duration of the project duration

The risk will be mitigated through:

- Field assistance team to ship equipment on time and COs to start customs clearance procedures early.
- Request the HC/REC to intervene / resolve the issue with appropriate authorities on behalf of the UN system.

E. Risks related to the import and transportation of large quantities of fuel.

Before engaging in a larger fuel operation WFP will consult with experts from the fuel industry to assess risks and operational modalities.

Project Cost and Benefits

19. The estimated project cost is US\$ 20,482,060.
20. This Special Operation will continue to enable the humanitarian community in Yemen and in neighbouring countries to move larger quantities of humanitarian relief items to affected areas in Yemen in a more reliable, safer and predictable way, as well as to facilitate communication and coordination, whilst preventing an overlap in response.
21. As the services under this Special Operation will be offered to humanitarian partners on both a free to user and cost recovery basis, the cost savings made by partners will allow additional investment in projects for affected populations, whilst on the other hand promoting the cost effectiveness and sustainability of cluster services.
22. Coordination services at both a local and regional level will help prevent overlap in response and identify any potential gaps when conducting cross-line, cross-border and regular response activities.

Monitoring & Evaluation

23. Measurement of the value added by the SO activities will be conducted via the Standard Project Report (SPR) for 2015. A detailed Lessons Learned Mission will be conducted in order to ensure that best practices highlighted during the operation are compiled and carried over to future operations. This will ultimately allow for a faster, better tailored and more cost- effective response mechanism in future emergencies.
24. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for this project include:
 - a) Percentage of service requests to handle, store and/or transport cargo fulfilled (85%)
 - b) Number of agencies and organizations utilizing transport and storage services (30)
 - c) Number of bulletins, maps, and other logistics information products produced and shared (30)
 - d) Percentage of fuel requests fulfilled (90%)
 - e) Number of inter-agency humanitarian convoys undertaken
 - f) Organizations receiving services from Logistics Cluster and responding to a user survey rate service satisfaction as 80% or above.
 - g) Percentage of passenger booking requests served against received (85%).
 - h) The ETC aims to support at least 14 organizations with information management, coordination, and common services.
 - i) Set-up of three 24/7 radio rooms and three day-time radio rooms in common operational areas.
 - j) Radio training in six common operational areas for the humanitarian community.
 - k) Meet with the partners on a weekly basis and accordingly meet with the governmental counterparts in order to coordinate frequency management procedures.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 25 April 2015 to 31 December 2015 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ 20,482,060 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director