



WFP Sierra Leone
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200927

Country:	Sierra Leone
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	WFP Service Provision for Ebola Phase 3 Rapid Response, Readiness and Recovery
Total cost (US\$):	US\$ 5,388,247
Duration:	6 Months (01 January 2016 – 30 June 2016)

Executive Summary

1. In response to the ongoing Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) emergency, WFP continues to provide services crucial to organizations' efforts to achieve and sustain a resilient zero, preventing further loss and devastation to the people of Sierra Leone.
2. To scale up the response based on the roadmap issued by the World Health Organization (WHO), on 19 September the UN Secretary-General established the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER). In support of UNMEER and partners, WFP launched regional Special Operation 200773 in support of the response in September 2014. From September 2014 and throughout 2015, WFP's Special Operation provided common services to support the international community's response to Ebola, helping to maintain a high level of multidisciplinary services across the affected countries. Following the evolution of the outbreak and acknowledging that Ebola still poses a threat, the response has now moved into a third phase,¹ projected to be in effect until mid-2016, with a greater focus on rapid response coordination and readiness.
3. While the regional Special Operation 200773 will end on 31 December 2015, this new Special Operation, tailored to Sierra Leone's context, will allow WFP to leverage the recently established infrastructure and logistics capacity used throughout 2015. This will enable WFP to continue to provide a highly able and dedicated rapid response mechanism to deal with three concurrent Ebola chains of transmission ('events') at no cost to the user, while further augmenting WFP's and its partners' outbreak readiness and recovery activities.
4. This Special Operation will have a duration of six months at a total estimated cost of US\$ 5,388,247.

Project Background

5. Due to the unprecedented scale of the West Africa EVD outbreak, WHO declared it an International Public Health Emergency in August 2014. To scale up the response based on the WHO-issued roadmap, on 19 September the UN Secretary-General

¹ Ebola Response Phase 3: Framework for Achieving and Sustaining a Resilient Zero (September 2015).

established UNMEER. In support of UNMEER and partners, WFP launched regional special operations in support for the response in September 2014.

6. WFP was requested to provide support to the Ebola Response across the Ebola Affected Countries (EACs) in a number of key areas. This included passenger and light cargo air transport capacity through the WFP-managed United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), logistics support and emergency telecommunication (ETC) services. The expertise of WFP engineers in the construction of logistics facilities and other structures has been essential for the humanitarian effort. Through these services WFP has augmented the logistics and operational capabilities available to organizations in the EACs by providing access to substantial transport capacity and storage, managed and operated by WFP in order to deliver essential items across the region.
7. As of 18 November 2015, over 28,598 cases and 11,299 deaths were recorded. While the case numbers have fallen, and the disease's geographic spread has significantly reduced, there is still a very real threat of the re-emergence and reintroduction of the virus, as shown by the new cases reported in Liberia after being declared Ebola-free for the second time by WHO on 03 September 2015. Members of the Interagency Collaboration on Ebola (ICE), convened by WHO, have developed a Strategic Framework for Phase 3 of the Ebola Outbreak Response with clear objectives in-order to achieve and sustain a 'resilient zero' in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.
8. The ongoing management and assessment of risk in Ebola-free areas requires a development of preparedness from partners and the provisioning of augmented logistical capabilities and services to enable Rapid Response Teams. This rapid response mechanism will improve coordination and responsiveness in order to react quickly and efficiently to outbreaks with sufficient resources to control the virus. As part of this preparation, and to improve the ability of the National government and humanitarian partners in tackling future pandemics, training exercises and capacity building at these locations will be implemented, based on the experience acquired during the Ebola operation.

Project Justification

9. The third phase of the EVD response effort builds upon the accomplishments of the Government of Sierra Leone, WHO, UNMEER and partners, specifically in the fulfillment of the objectives of Phase 1: the rapid scale-up of treatment beds, safe and dignified burial teams, behavior change capacities (active from August to December 2014), and Phase 2: enhanced capacities for case finding, contact tracing, community engagement (established from January to July 2015).
10. To align and optimize the efforts of humanitarian partners in each country, Phase 3 seeks: to manage and respond to the consequences of residual Ebola risks by defining and interrupting all remaining chains of transmission and by, amongst other things, developing a risk based event management team within country and by providing a rapid response capacity to be able to rapidly respond to three concurrent emergencies in different geographical locations within country. Phase 3 will implement an 'event management' approach to define and interrupt chains of

transmissions, with each transmission chain constituting an ‘event’, and managed based on the risk of ongoing transmissions associated with each. To fully achieve its objective, Phase 3 will require the cooperation of humanitarian partners operating within the response and national authorities, particularly at district level.

11. Against the backdrop of the Phase 3 strategic framework, WFP will focus its operational priorities to ensure that an effective and efficient response continues in line with the specific context in Sierra Leone by establishing a country level Special Operation (SO). The re-focused operation will build upon and leverage the capacities, institutional knowledge, infrastructure and equipment introduced throughout 2014 and 2015’s Regional Ebola operation.
12. The established protocol for Sierra Leone to be declared Ebola free requires a 42 day period to elapse since the last reported case was cleared². Following this, an enhanced monitoring period of 90 days comes into effect. However, as has been witnessed in all three EACs, the reintroduction or re-emergence of the virus is possible and considered likely. This SO provides the means to prepare and deploy rapid response items and the teams required to support the main logistical and telecommunications response requirements at a national level, should an Ebola event occur.
13. Re-purposing the already established infrastructure at Port Loko Main Logistics Base, the SO provides a key staging area for Rapid Response operations. In cooperation with ICE, the Government of Sierra Leone and its humanitarian partners, WFP plans to further develop the Port Loko facility by providing essential improvements to the operational capacity and services available to its partners. This will establish a sustainable logistics and operations mechanism to serve the national interest in the fight against EVD.

Project Objective(s)

14. The objectives of this Special Operation are to provide logistical and operational support to augment the operational capacity of the Government of Sierra Leone, ICE and the international community to respond rapidly and effectively to potential Ebola outbreaks.
15. Specifically, through this SO WFP aims to:
 - I. Provide dedicated and appropriate logistics response capacity in case of three simultaneous EVD events;
 - II. Ensure the national government is provided with the necessary assets and capacity to respond rapidly and efficiently to other potential EVD outbreaks and non-health emergencies in Sierra Leone.
 - III. Provide an appropriate exit strategy that augments and enables the National response mechanisms.
16. The objectives above are linked to WFP’s Strategic Results Framework under Strategic Objective 1: *Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies.*

² Sierra Leone declared Ebola-free by WHO for the first time on 7 November and has entered the 90 days of enhanced surveillance, which is scheduled to conclude on 5 February 2016.

Project Implementation

17. This project will have a duration of six months and will be adapted and revised as the situation evolves, as further requests emerge from the Office of National Security and/or the ICE and the wider humanitarian community, and as results from situational assessments become available. The UNHAS component is scheduled from 01 January 2016 to 31 March 2016.
18. Specifically, the following activities will be implemented by WFP:

Cargo Transport and Storage (Objective I):

19. The Port Loko facility will continue to provide dedicated mobile storage units and allocated space for pre-positioning of rapid response materials for Ebola event management teams; modularized kits will also be used where possible. WFP's fleet of six dedicated WFP trucks and commercially contracted truck services will be made available for each of three concurrent responses if required. In-country warehousing and trucking dedicated for rapid response Ebola event management purposes will be provided at no cost to the user.

Engineering Support (Objective I)

20. To support the timely assembly and serviceability of rapid response infrastructure needs, WFP engineering will deploy construction and electrical engineering team leaders within one working day, ensuring that rapid response units are fully established and operational in 96 hours of an outbreak being announced. Engineering support related to rapid response Ebola event management activities will be provided at no cost to the user.

ICT Support Service Provision (Objective I)

21. Leveraging the existing hardware introduced during 2014 and 2015, WP ICT will support the timely establishment of telecommunications connectivity by deploying specialists and existing equipment to ensure that rapid response telecommunications capacity is established within 72 hours of an outbreak being announced. ICT support related to rapid response Ebola event management activities will be provided at no cost to the user.

UNHAS (Objective I)

22. Following user demand and needs of Ebola responders, UNHAS will remain operational until 31 March 2016. UNHAS will continue to provide a specially equipped helicopter for in-country medical evacuations of health and humanitarian personnel including EVD-symptomatic cases. Considering the continued threat of Ebola in Guinea, the UN Resident Coordinator and the Ebola Emergency Coordination Manager at Sierra Leone level have requested the continued retention of a helicopter to enable rapid response access and medevac capacity until the end of

Phase 3 of the response. Adequate services will also be available to support on-demand aviation services for the transportation of urgently required vaccines.

Bilateral Service Provision and UNHRD (Objective I)

23. WFP's bilateral service provision mechanisms will provide the possibility of leveraging WFP's logistics, ICT and engineering capacity outside of the rapid response Ebola event management activities through the engagement of WFP Sierra Leone logistics. When outside of the rapid response Ebola event management activities, services will be provided under cost recovery. The Service Provision team will also be available to provide partners with assets procured under cost recovery drawing upon WFP managed services such as the UNHRD network.

Rapid Response and Readiness facility for 'event' management (Objective II)

24. Operational planning will focus on continuing to transition the Port Loko Main Logistics Base to a Rapid Response, Readiness & Recovery facility that allows for a collaborative rapid response approach between the Office of National Security / ICE with WFP leveraging its logistics and operational expertise to ensure items are dispatched and deployed immediately following an Ebola outbreak. WFP will collaborate with partners to prepare and pre-position rapid response kits with WFP providing components of the kits when required/available.

Capacity building (Objective II)

25. WFP will design and implement targeted capacity building to humanitarian partners, national disaster management authorities and other stakeholders. The Rapid Response facility in Port Loko will allow for logistics and rapid response operations training to be provided either through WFP, an outsourced medical logistics professional team and/or other stakeholders working in the Ebola rapid response framework.
26. Training may also be provided to the Government of Sierra Leone District Health and Medical Teams on emergency logistics operations oriented to rapid response and robust readiness. Up to 10 trainings will be conducted with up to 20 participants per session, with training focused on logistics and ICT operations capacity augmentation. The Port Loko facility will also be made available to other humanitarian partners to conduct other trainings.

Exit Strategy (Objective III)

27. WFP will develop an exit strategy to provide a sustainable rapid response and readiness facility on behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone:
 - Logistics and operations capacity of national partners including district level partners will be augmented throughout to enable an environment where WFP team will no longer be required to coordinate rapid response logistics and ICT capacities.
 - Where appropriate, transfer of property to National response mechanisms and District Medical and Health Teams, and/or handover of assets to humanitarian partners still engaged on Ebola Readiness and Rapid Response activities.

- WFP’s logistics capacity will remain available for partners where appropriate to support on the logistics needs under cost recovery.

Project Management

28. Overall, project oversight and fund management will remain with WFP Sierra Leone’s Country Director; the Sierra Leone Country Office Finance Officer will be responsible for the allotment of funds. The Country Office will appoint a Logistics Officer, reporting to the country Head of Logistics, who will be responsible for the implementation of project activities.

Risk Management

29. Some contextual and operational risk factors could impact the successful implementation of this Special Operation. Possible mitigation measures are included below.

- The Special Operation caters for the support to the Ebola Response Phase 3 activities, to promptly respond to small-scale outbreaks that may occur in 2016. Should the outbreak become larger, capacity on the ground and provision of services may need to be expanded further and budget and project activities will be adjusted accordingly.
- A lack of funding from the Government of Sierra Leone to assume full responsibility, management and operation costs of the logistics structures will challenge the sustainability of the hand-over to the Government of Sierra Leone nominated response lead department. WFP will engage in regular conversations with government counterparts and partners for a timely and orderly transition.

Budget Summary

	Value US\$	% overall budget
Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A)	4,694,984	87%
Direct Support Costs (DSC)	340,761	6%
<i>Total WFP direct project costs (US\$)</i>	<i>5,035,745</i>	<i>93%</i>
Indirect Support Costs (ISC) 7%	352,502	7%
TOTAL WFP COSTS	5,388,247	100%

Monitoring and Evaluation

30. In line with the project document, WFP will continue to monitor: (i) the management of the Port Loko facility (ii) the utilization of services by partners; (iii) risk factors that arise that may impact the logistics component of the Ebola rapid response operation.

31. Assessment missions and in-country consultations will continue to contribute to overall management and further ensure that lessons identified are continually applied to WFP’s service provision strategy under the framework of this project.

32. WFP’s key performance indicators under this operation will include:

- a. No. of agencies and organizations using storage facilities and total storage space utilized for Rapid Response (m³);
- b. Volume of essential items transported for rapid response;
- c. Prepositioning of required (and available) stocks in preparation for rapid response requirements;
- d. Number of locations equipped and provided with ICT connectivity under rapid response event management;
- e. Response to medical evacuations duly requested; No. of agencies and organizations utilizing WFP project capacities under bilateral service provision;
- f. Organizations receiving common services responding to a survey rating of 'service satisfaction' as 80% or above;
- g. Number of requests for use of the training facility fulfilled;
- h. Number of trainings provided;
- i. Transition strategy established for project closure.

The proposed indicators will improve the overall performance management framework by ensuring that activities implemented through the project support the achievement of outcomes which support the wider Ebola response.

- 33. Part of WFP's transition strategy will incorporate the strengthening of in-country capacities through trainings for all humanitarian partners, as well as the provision of technical expertise and logistics infrastructure management. WFP, together with partners from the ICE will work with the different national governments, including humanitarian agencies, present in Sierra Leone to build the local capacity to better prepare and respond to future epidemics.

RECOMMENDATION

- 34. This Special Operation covering the period from 01 January 2016 to 30 June 2016 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ 5,388,247 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin COUSIN
Executive Director