



WFP Guinea
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200923

Country:	Guinea
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	WFP Service Provision for Ebola Response Phase 3
Total cost (US\$):	US\$ 7,015,000
Duration:	Six months (01 January to 30 June 2016)

Executive Summary

The ongoing outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in West Africa is the largest experienced in history. The fast and extended spread of the virus outbreak required WFP to provide crucial common logistics services to the humanitarian community to drive case incidence to zero, and ensure a sustained end to EVD transmission.

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 the Regional Special Operation 200773 in September 2014 to provide the logistics backbone of the health response to stop the spread of EVD. Through this Special Operation, WFP established a common services platform in the three countries most affected by Ebola (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone), leveraging WFP expertise to enhance the efficiency of the international community's response to EVD. As Ebola still poses a threat, the response has moved into a third phase that focuses on rapid response coordination and readiness, and which is foreseen to end mid-2016.

While the Regional Special Operation will end on 31 December 2015, the new Special Operation, tailored to Guinea's context, will allow WFP to leverage the recently established infrastructure and logistics capacity throughout 2014 and 2015. This will enable WFP to continue to provide a highly dedicated rapid response mechanism to deal with potential small-scale outbreaks, while further increasing and enhancing the EVD readiness and recovery activities of partners.

With a budgeted cost of US\$ 7,015,000, Special Operation 200923 will be managed by the WFP Guinea Country Office from 01 January to 30 June 2016 and will ensure strategic alignment with the multi-sectoral response Plan (Phase Three) which seeks to continue the Ebola response beyond 2015.

Project Background

1. The West Africa EVD outbreak was declared an International Public Health Emergency by WHO on 8 August 2014, becoming the largest ever recorded with 28,598 cases and 11,299 deaths as of 18 November 2015.

2. WFP was requested to provide logistics support to the humanitarian community under the framework of UNMEER to provide the operational framework and unity of purpose to ensure a rapid, effective and coherent health response. WFP thus launched the regional Special Operations 200773 in September 2014 to augment the capacity of the health response under the United Nations System umbrella.
3. WFP provided support in a number of key areas, such as passenger and light cargo air transport capacity through the WFP-managed United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), logistics support and emergency telecommunication services. Critical WFP engineering and set-up of logistics facilities and structures has allowed WFP to augment the logistics and operational capabilities available to actors in the affected countries. Additionally, WFP provided access to significant trucking capacity and storage to deliver essential relief items across the region.
4. While the case numbers have fallen, and the geographic spread of the disease has significantly reduced, it is of the uttermost importance to remain vigilant to avoid the re-emergence or reintroduction of the virus, and to promptly react should they occur, as shown by the new cases reported in Liberia on 22 November after being declared Ebola-free for the second time by WHO on 3 September 2015.
5. During the last months of 2015, the provision of common services to the humanitarian community across Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone has adapted to the evolution of the outbreak and partners' needs. Members of the Interagency Collaboration on Ebola (ICE), convened by the 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 Leone¹.
6. Against the backdrop of reaching and sustaining zero Ebola cases, WFP supports Phase 3 of the Ebola Response, adjusting the provision of common logistics services to enable rapid response mechanism for a quick and efficient reaction to outbreaks. WFP will also prepare the ground for an orderly and effective transition of assets and capacities put in place in support of the Ebola response to the Government of Guinea, improving the ability of the national government and humanitarian partners to respond to future emergencies through capacity building based on the experience acquired during the Ebola operation.

Project Justification

7. The Strategic Framework for Phase 3 developed by ICE follows the achievement of Phase 1 from August to December 2014 (rapid scale-up of treatment beds, safe and dignified burial teams, behavior change capacities) and Phase 2 from January to July 2015 (enhanced capacities for case finding, contact tracing, community engagement).
8. The third phase aims *to manage and respond to the consequences of residual Ebola risks by defining and interrupting all remaining chains of transmission*. It also seeks to develop a risk based 'event management team' within each country

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

and to provide a rapid response capacity to rapidly enable a response to three concurrent outbreaks in different national locations within country. As each transmission chain constitutes an ‘event’ managed on the basis of the risk of ongoing transmissions associated with each chain, to fully fulfil Phase 3 objectives, all humanitarian partners involved in the response will have to cooperate among themselves and with national authorities.

9. 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 Guinea’s context. The country-specific Special Operation will build upon and leverage the capacities, institutional knowledge, infrastructure and equipment established in 2014 and 2015.
10. The established protocol to declare a country Ebola-free requires 42 days to pass since the registration of the last case², after which an enhanced monitoring period of 90 days comes into effect. However, as the reintroduction or re-emergence of the virus remains possible, this Special Operation provides the means to prepare and deploy necessary rapid response items required in the event of new outbreaks.
11. For Guinea, operations have been specially challenged by a lack of logistical infrastructure and the lack of viable alternate means of air transport in country. In October 2015, the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator in Guinea requested WFP to continue UNHAS operation in order to continue to facilitate the ongoing humanitarian response beyond 2016 to enable safe and reliable air transport services to the humanitarian community in Guinea as well as to provide capacity for possible evacuation of humanitarian staff when required.
12. In addition, in support of Phase 3, WFP would continue providing adequate logistics support through June 2016, as well as storage and transport services of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)/Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) kits currently stored on behalf of the Government of Guinea and Pharmacie Central de Guinée (PCG).
13. Capacity building is critical for an orderly transfer of assets, and WFP aims to implement a sustainable transition to PCG of the management and operation of the logistics bases which served as the logistics backbone of the Ebola response in Guinea as part of the exit strategy.

Project Objectives

14. The objectives of this Special Operation are to provide logistical and operational support to augment the operational capacity of the government of Guinea, ICE and the international community to respond timely and effectively to potential Ebola outbreaks.
15. Specifically, through this Special Operation WFP aims to:

² Guinea has not yet been declared Ebola-free by WHO. On 17 November 2015, the last registered EVD patient was discharged from an Ebola Treatment Unit, thus beginning the countdown of the 42 days necessary for such declaration.

- I. Ensure the national government and humanitarian community is provided with the necessary logistics infrastructure and capacity, such as transportation and storage of cargo;
 - II. Respond timely and efficiently to other potential EVD outbreaks and non-health emergencies in Guinea;
 - III. Provide an appropriate exit strategy and capacity building 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.*

Project Implementation

17. This project will have a duration of six months and will be adapted and revised as the situation evolves. Under its framework, WFP will implement the following activities:

Cargo storage and transport (Objective I)

18. In line with the third phase of the Ebola response and the defined transition strategy, WFP will continue to provide a tailored level of logistics support. The provision of logistics support includes, among others, the continued operability of the Main Logistics Bases (MLBs), Forward Logistics Bases (FLBs), for storage, targeted transport services, and logistics coordination upon request as per OCHA's *Mécanisme de la réponse rapide à la maladie Ebola.*
19. Upon request, storage and transportation of PPE/IPC kits currently stored at WFP-managed logistics facilities on behalf of Government of Guinea up to the delivery points including the last mile transport. WFP will bring to the national government technical support with other partner to design distribution plan, however will not be responsible for the allocation which remains with the Government of Guinea.
20. While more than 3,500 m³ of PPE and IPC kits are still stocked by WHO in the WFP-managed UNHRD in Las Palmas, there is a significant gap in warehouse capacity in Guinea and all storage facilities are currently full. The remaining stock will be delivered to Guinea as soon as storage space will be again available at the facilities in country.

UNHAS (Objective I)

21. Following consultations with users and a formal request from the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, WFP will continue UNHAS operations in Guinea between January and June 2016 to support humanitarian activities. UNHAS offers a critical service to the response, enabling the transportation of humanitarian personnel, medical supplies and equipment, and other essential humanitarian cargo to hard-to-reach locations
22. The fleet will consist of one fixed-wing aircraft based in Conakry, capable of serving unpaved airstrips to facilitate the access to remote locations across the country. The air service is essential to ensure a reliable link between Guinea's

capital and field locations not reachable with commercial airlines; it also provides an inter-capital connection between Guinea and Sierra Leone, according to users' needs and demand. Between January and March, UNHAS will continue to provide a specially equipped helicopter for in-country medical evacuations of health and humanitarian personnel, including EVD-symptomatic cases.

23. Along the support to the fight against Ebola and the provision of a medical evacuation service, UNHAS is equally important in the post-Ebola early recovery context. Its activities will be essential to support coordination efforts for transition activities, such as vaccination campaigns, or other activities requiring the quick deployment of responders and equipment. The air service is expected to support a wide range of organizations including NGOs, UN agencies, and donor institutions to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of humanitarian activities in Guinea. UNHAS remains fully flexible to meet the changing requirements of the humanitarian response.

Support to Emergency Preparedness and Response (Objective II)

24. In line with Phase 3 approach and to facilitate timely support to contain potential new EVD cases in 2016, the Special Operation also caters for the preparation and deployment of rapid response items in the scenario of three simultaneous EVD. Such items will be stored to support the deployment of multi-disciplinary rapid response teams, to ensure an adequate level of preparedness and response. WFP will collaborate with partners to prepare and pre-position rapid response kits with WFP providing components of the kits when required/available.
25. Under this Special Operation, WFP's commercially contracted truck services will also provide transport solutions for rapid response, with dedicated trucks to be made available if required, should small-scale Ebola outbreaks occur.

Capacity building for a sustainable transition strategy (Objective II)

26. To ensure sustainable transition of knowledge, capacities and assets, WFP will support PCG to identify, recruit and train logisticians to be deployed in existing government health storage structure. This new personnel, and PCG young professional, will follow on-the-job training, working on a daily basis alongside WFP staff in different logistics structures (MLBs and FLBs) and positions. Classroom training (including on cargo tracking, inventory management system, supply chain management, basic computer skills) will also be delivered as needed for PCG staff, and the learning curve of PCG staff will continue to be regularly assessed. This will facilitate the management of the existing logistics structures, once gradually handed-over to the Government of Guinea.

Exit strategy (Objective III)

27. WFP will develop and exit strategy to provide a sustainable rapid response and readiness capacity jointly with the Government of Guinea. In addition to the capacity building activities under objective II to reinforce National logistic capacity, WFP and the Government of Guinea will determine the allocation and

destination of all asset already loaned or facilities already established. Asset transition planning will be validated by the end of the project.

Project Management

28. Overall project oversight and fund management will remain with WFP Guinea Country Director, and Guinea Country Office Finance Officer will be responsible for the allotment of funds. Under the leadership of the Country Director, the WFP Head of Logistics will be responsible for overall Special Operation oversight and capacity building management.
29. Regular external coordination will be held with all partners for logistics and capacity building activities. WFP and PCG will continue to regularly meet to evaluate the progress of the training. WFP and PCG will coordinate on the operational aspect of the transport and storage of PPE/IPC supplies. Additionally, WFP will continue information sharing and close collaboration with the actors working on the Ebola response in support of the Phase 3 Framework

Risk Management

30. Some contextual and operational risk factors could impact the successful implementation of this Special Operation. Possible mitigation measures are included below:
31. The Special Operation caters for the support to 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 following a Budget Revision. The scale up will leverage on the existing capacity and services provision maintained under this Special Operation, thus enabling a quicker reaction.
32. A lack of sustained resources made available by the Government of Guinea/PCG to assume full responsibility, management and operation costs of the logistics structures will challenge the sustainability of the hand-over to the Government of Guinea/PCG. WFP will engage in regular conversations with government counterparts and partners for a timely and orderly transition.

Project Cost and Benefits

33. This Special Operation has a total budget of US\$7,015,000 accounting for the activities outlined above.
34. Continued close collaboration with humanitarian and government partners will have the added benefit of further strengthening existing partnerships and close collaboration experienced during the Ebola response, thus also enhancing the response capabilities of the Government of Guinea for future crises.

Monitoring & Evaluation

35. WFP will monitor: 1) learning curve of PCG's staff under-going on-the-job-training continued close collaboration with for the hand over and management of the MLB and FLBs, in line with the transition strategy 2) the use and relevance of services provided and the level of stocks managed;
36. The key performance indicators for this project will be:
- A. Monthly volume of essential items transported vs. number of Service Request Forms (SRFs) for air and service transport;³
 - B. Rapid response kit defined, stored and ready for use;
 - C. Number of PCG staff satisfactorily trained by June 2016 (10). Each PCG staff member is being assessed by their WFP supervisor on a series of pre-defined KPIs,⁴ with the goal to secure at least a rating of 2 (Fully Satisfactory).
 - D. Response to medical evacuations duly requested;
37. Assessment missions and in-country consultations will continue to contribute to overall management and further ensure that lessons identified are continually applied under the framework of this project.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2016 at a total cost to WFP of **US\$ 7,015,000** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director

³ As these services will be made available upon request, the target remains that all requests are met as required.

⁴ Professional competence, Fulfillment of ToR, Ability to handle additional responsibility, Technical judgment, Problem solving approach, Quality of report/output (timeliness/clarity), Ability to cooperate with staff at all levels and get along with other members in the team, Diligence/ reliability, Ability to work under minimum guidance, Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.