



WFP SUDAN SPECIAL OPERATION 201041

Country:	Sudan
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Road infrastructure repairs in White Nile State in support of WFP and the humanitarian community for the safe passage of humanitarian cargo between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan.
Total cost (US\$):	\$2,487,516
Duration:	December 2016 – May 2018

Executive Summary

This Special Operation (SO) is launched in support of World Food Programme (WFP) operations in South Sudan which are currently handled through the EMOP 200859 “*Emergency Operation in Response to Conflict in South Sudan*” and the PRRO 200572 “*Food and Nutrition Assistance for Relief and Recovery, Supporting transition and Enhancing Capabilities to Ensure Sustainable Hunger Solution in South Sudan*”. Specifically, this Special Operation aims to ensure the safe passage of humanitarian cargo from the Republic of Sudan to the Republic of South Sudan through the rehabilitation of the South Sudan Northern Corridor in Sudan’s White Nile State. This corridor is a vital supply route for WFP operations in South Sudan, through which approximately 15 percent of the total commodity requirements is transported.

Following the findings of the Joint Technical Committee (JTC), which is responsible for facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance from Sudan to South Sudan, the Special Operation seeks to rehabilitate the road infrastructure for the safe passage of humanitarian cargo through White Nile State, specifically the 130 km portion of road from Rabak to Joda, Sudan which serves as WFP South Sudan’s Northern Corridor for commodity delivery.

The use of this road corridor for the passage of humanitarian cargo was first agreed in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Governments of South Sudan and Sudan in June 2014 and then extended for a further six months by all parties at a review meeting in Addis Ababa on 31 May 2016. The conditions of the MoU extension stipulated that the continued use of the road from Rabak, Sudan into South Sudan beyond December 2016 is contingent upon the rehabilitation of the road. Government of Sudan authorities have stated that the MoU will be extended beyond December 2016 only if the road rehabilitation project is initiated.

The primary objective of this SO is to facilitate an un-interrupted provision of emergency assistance through the Northern Corridor from Kosti, White Nile State, Sudan to Renk, Upper Nile State, South Sudan. It is anticipated that the activities

carried out under this SO will not only rehabilitate the road infrastructure in Sudan, but will also benefit the general development of the country and local residents, It is indeed envisaged that this SO will significantly contribute to the resilience of the local communities on both sides of the border, contributing to the growing of local economies and increasing the commercial links between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan

This SO will focus on the improvement of the road from Rabak to Joda in White Nile State, Sudan. The road will be rehabilitated based on assessments and criteria proposed by WFP engineers and shared with the JTC established by the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan to oversee the implementation and management of the MoU.

The SO will be implemented under the overall responsibility of WFP Sudan within a period of 18 months, starting 1st December 2016. Total cost for the operation is US\$ 2,487,516 as detailed in the budget of which 89% of the budget is for CD&A, 4 % for DSC and 7 % for ISC. The CD&A budget is spread 82% on the construction works and 18 % on the staff related costs for implementation. Moreover, Annex II shows a detailed Bill of Quantities (BoQ) of the construction works.

Project Background

1. The Republic of South Sudan is a land-locked country of nearly 12 million people. In July 2011, South Sudan gained independence from Sudan, ending one of the longest civil wars in record, and remains the world's youngest nation. In December 2013, armed conflict broke out between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and those loyal to Vice President Riek Machar, who had been ousted during a power struggle. After two years of conflict, in late April 2016, Riek Machar returned to South Sudan and was sworn in as the first Vice President as part of the compromise peace agreement. A Transitional Government of National Unity was subsequently sworn in. Renewed fighting erupted in the middle of July, resulting in increased tension and insecurity throughout the country and the replacement of first Vice President Machar with Taban Deng Gai. While the government maintains control of Juba, fighting persists in many parts of the country.
2. Since the onset of the civil conflict in South Sudan in 2013, the need for humanitarian assistance to vulnerable and difficult-to-reach communities continues to increase. The latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report indicated that 4.8 million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance in South Sudan during the lean season, which typically lasts through September/October. Of these, the greatest number of people facing emergency and crisis levels of food insecurity are in Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Unity states. Furthermore, the IPC reported that the entire Greater Upper Nile region, including those bordering Sudan, remains structurally fragile and vulnerable as a result of more than two years of conflict. In Upper Nile state alone, the IPC indicated that 490,000 people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance and are facing emergency and crisis levels of food insecurity.
3. In June 2014, the governments of Sudan and South Sudan signed a landmark MOU authorizing the movement of humanitarian assistance from Sudan to

conflict affected communities in South Sudan. The MoU designates WFP as the sole agency responsible for the transportation of humanitarian cargo from Sudan to South Sudan. In 2014, WFP re-opened Kosti sub-office to support cross-border operations to the Upper Nile region in South Sudan via road and via river. The river barge operation has been discontinued since December 2014 due to security reasons.

4. In 2016, access to Upper Nile state continues to be limited from southern transport routes in South Sudan due to poor road conditions, many of which deteriorate even further during the rainy season, which lasts through November. In an effort to reach populations accessible from the North, WFP agreed with the governments of Sudan and South Sudan to continue to transport humanitarian assistance from Raba, Sudan to Renk, South Sudan within the framework of the 2014 MoU. Each month, WFP aims to provide assistance to around 360,000 people in Upper Nile State alone. To do so, WFP relies on commodities delivered through Sudan to Renk, as well as airdrops of food assistance in remote locations. So far this year, WFP has delivered over 26,600 mt of commodities through twenty road convoys from Sudan to South Sudan. River transport from Malakal northwards is not guaranteed, making the northern road corridor from Sudan even more significant for WFP's logistics operations.
5. WFP has been using the Rabak - Joda road in White Nile state in the Republic of Sudan to transit its supplies from Port Sudan to South Sudan. This tarmac surfaced road is not in good condition; due to the usage of heavy trucks to deliver humanitarian cargo, the road is increasingly deteriorating. As a result, it would be difficult to continue to use the road as a corridor for future support to South Sudan beneficiaries. In addition, there is a high risk that the Government of Sudan may not extend the MoU if the rehabilitation is not undertaken, thus cutting off land access of humanitarian assistance to conflict affected populations in the north of South Sudan. This will substantially increase the cost of humanitarian assistance to this population and also significantly impact the effectiveness of the operation.

Project Justification

6. The road connecting Rabak to Joda in Sudan consists largely of badly and/or non-maintained asphalt and dirt sections of road. A technical WFP team assessed the 130km stretch between Rabak, Sudan, to Joda, Sudan in March 2016. The full report of the assessment is provided as Annex I. The assessment found sections of the road in varying conditions, with some requiring only minimal works and others requiring structural overlay, filling of potholes and re-graveling.
7. The road rehabilitation is essential for continued delivery of humanitarian supplies to South Sudan and is required to ensure that the road is safer for its users and easily passable year-round. It is crucial that activities related to this SO starts as of early December 2016, before the expiration of the MoU on 31 December 2016. Without the rehabilitation works, access to vulnerable populations will be highly constrained and would necessitate either air transport and/or prepositioning of WFP food commodities, both of which would significantly increase the cost of transportation and storage under WFP's food assistance operations in South Sudan.

Project Objectives

8. The objective of this SO is to facilitate the timely and efficient delivery of food assistance in Upper Nile State Southern Sudan; and

Project Implementation

9. The short-term implementation strategy will firstly focus on the acquirement of funding, and secondly on the initiation of the contract for the rehabilitation of the road segment. Donor communities of both WFP Sudan and WFP South Sudan have been fully briefed on the importance of this SO and, through unofficial consultations, have showed a high interest in funding this important project.
9. Once the SO has been initiated, it is estimated that the pre-tender phase will last two months, with a tendering period of four months. Implementation would be carried out over a twelve-month period. The overall project duration will be 18 months.
10. The rehabilitation of the road will be implemented in compliance with government-endorsed standards and with locally available materials where possible; the rehabilitation works will include the repair of the gravel shoulders and the overlay of the asphalt wearing course. In addition, this SO will be implemented through contracting a commercial construction company who will employ local communities for labor works.
11. Successful implementation of the project will rely on the overall security situation in Sudan. It can be expected that volatility, insecurity, localized fighting and natural disasters could continue in limited fashion. Close consultation with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), WFP Security and

the Government of Sudan will inform the staff engaged in the SO works towards appropriate and timely interventions, to avoid disruption of work.

Project Management

12. A WFP management team will be responsible for the initial first phase of this SO which will primarily be composed of members of the Sudan Country Office.
13. WFP Sudan Head of Logistics will be the overall Project Manager for this SO. WFP Sudan Country Director will be the Fund Manager for this SO and WFP Sudan Head of Finance will be the Allotment Manager.
14. The management will consist of an International Senior Engineer and three national engineers who will be supported by WFP CO staff.

Risk Management

15. Security in White Nile State is stable but volatile. WFP will ensure that Minimum Operating Residential Security Standards (MORSS) applicable to White Nile State will be duly enforced to ensure the construction and monitoring activities are safely undertaken.
16. WFP is committed to complete the rehabilitation activities within the time of this SO. WFP acknowledges that due to volatile security, lack of funding from donors, or any other unexpected risk, rehabilitation activities may not be completed within the agreed time, putting at risk the extension of the MoU and the opening of the humanitarian corridor. WFP will closely monitor the security situation and minimize any risks to the contractor.
17. To ensure the quality of the rehabilitation work, WFP will follow the specifications used for the initial assessment and ensure that the construction activities will maintain the minimum requirements set by the Sudan Ministry of Transport, Roads and Bridges. A monitoring mission will further ensure that all agreed quality standards will be fully respected.

Project Cost and Benefits

18. This project has an implementation cost of US\$ 2,487,516 and is detailed in the SO Budget. 89% of the budget is for CD&A, 4 % for DSC and 7 % for ISC. The CD&A budget is spread 82% on the construction works and 18 % on staff related costs.
19. WFP, humanitarian and commercial actors will benefit from the repairs of the road in terms of increased access (both political and physical), leading to potential lower costs for transportation and, in the long term, re-activation of the trade between the two countries. The utilization of local products in the construction activities and the employment of local labour will also positively benefit the local economy.

20. WFP expects to benefit further by reducing the travel times and maintain the costs of transportation of the humanitarian corridor stable. The repair of the road will also benefit the road users, reducing the operational costs.
21. WFP will preserve the normal social mobility in the corridor and contribute to the normalization of relations between the two countries, encouraging the interaction between local communities on both sides of the Sudan – South Sudan border.
22. By rehabilitating the Rabak – Joda road, WFP will fill the initial expectations of both Governments, safeguard the MoU and help ensuring continued political access along this route.

Monitoring & Evaluation

23. The monitoring plan will include the deployment of a Monitoring Consultant to evaluate the outcome of the project and undertake a Lessons Learned exercise. This exercise will also include a detailed monitoring of the secondary benefit effects of the rehabilitation of the road, in order to evaluate the impact of the project on the local communities in both sides of the border.
24. General Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be monitored are:
 - a. Travel time – Target: Travel time reduced along the route (20%)
 - b. Kilometers of road repaired/built (130 KMs)

Exit strategy

25. WFP aims to hand over the project at the conclusion of the 18 months to the Government of Sudan and State authorities, once the rehabilitation of the Rabak – Joda road has been completed.
26. The project will be handed over to the Republic of Sudan Ministry of Transport, Roads and Bridges for management and future maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION

This SO covering the period from 1 December 2016 to 30 May 2018 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ **\$2,487,516** is recommended for approval by the WFP Chief of Staff with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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 Jim Harvey
 Chief of Staff