



Standard Project Report 2015

World Food Programme in Yemen (YE)

Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Yemen

Reporting period: 1 January - 31 December 2015

Project Information	
Project Number	200845
Project Category	Single Country Special Operation
Overall Planned Beneficiaries	N/A
Planned Beneficiaries in 2015	N/A
Total Beneficiaries in 2015	N/A

Key Project Dates	
Project Approval Date	April 30, 2015
Planned Start Date	May 01, 2015
Actual Start Date	May 20, 2015
Project End Date	December 31, 2016
Financial Closure Date	N/A

Approved budget in USD	
Food and Related Costs	N/A
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	17,135,270
Direct Support Costs	1,034,861
Cash-Based Transfers and Related Costs	N/A
Indirect Support Costs	1,271,909
Total	19,442,040

Commodities	Metric Tonnes
Planned Commodities in 2015	0
Actual Commodities 2015	0
Total Approved Commodities	N/A

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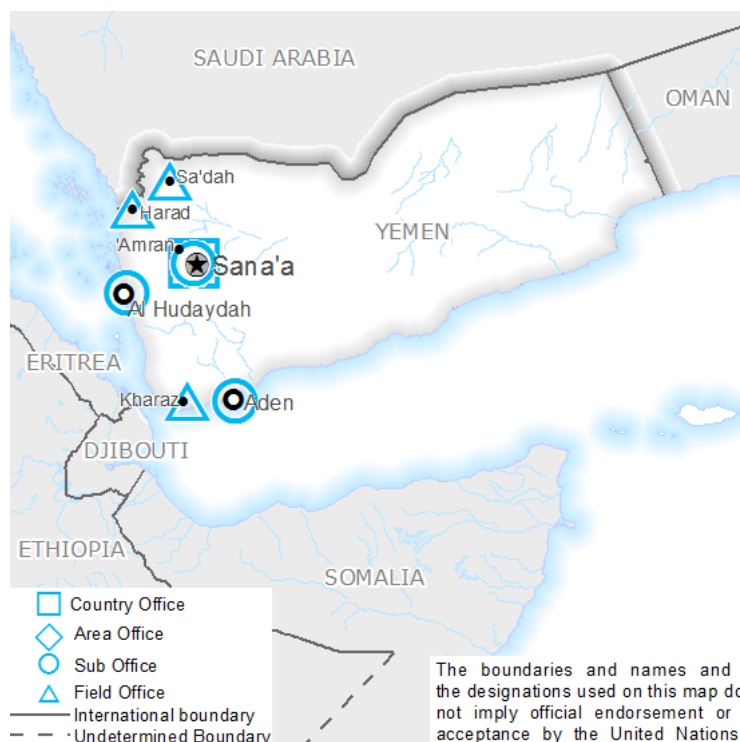
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COUNTRY OVERVIEW



Country Background

In March 2015, Yemen's conflict, which began in 2014 escalated into a full, nationwide conflict drawing international military intervention. After capturing the capital, Sana'a, in September 2014, Houthi forces (also known as Ansar Allah) advanced through Yemen's central and southern governorates, reaching the southern port city of Aden in March 2015. A coalition of Arab states led by Saudi Arabia began a military campaign to assist Yemeni pro-government forces loyal to the Yemeni President-in-exile, Abdu Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, in recapturing territory controlled by Houthi forces. Throughout the associated fighting, and according to the United Nations, more than 3,000 civilians have been killed and almost 6,000 injured, including over 700 children killed, since March 2015. Attacks on civilians by militant groups such as Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Ansar Al Sharia and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have compounded an already alarming humanitarian crisis. There have also been widespread reports of children being forcibly recruited to fight. Despite two humanitarian pauses, in May and a failed pause in July, and a ceasefire in December, the humanitarian situation in Yemen continues to deteriorate - particularly in Taizz, Ibb, Al Bayda, Sa'ada and Aden governorates. Throughout the year, humanitarian access remained heavily dependent on dynamic and frequent changes in the security situation, including denials of security clearance and seizures of humanitarian cargo.

With a population of 25.9 million, Yemen is a lower middle income, food deficit country. It is ranked 160 out of 188 countries by the Human Development Index 2015, a decrease from its 2014 ranking of 154. Yemen suffers from alarming levels of food insecurity, ranked as the tenth most food insecure country in the world by the Global Hunger Index 2015. In June 2015, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis found that at least 6 million people were in need of lifesaving emergency food assistance, with 10 of the 22 governorates being classified as Phase 4 (crisis). This deteriorating trend is reflected in the 2016 Humanitarian Needs Overview, which found that 82 percent of the population were in need of some form of humanitarian assistance while 14.4 million people were food insecure, of which 7.6 million were severely food insecure. Despite government efforts to make progress in achieving some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Yemen is likely to remain an off-track country as the national poverty rate remains high at 80 percent.

Even before the escalation of civil conflict, Yemen was highly dependent on food imports, importing 90 percent of its total food requirements. The conflict has severely disrupted the regular supply of food, with serious implications for Yemen's vulnerability and food insecurity levels: prices of cooking gas and diesel have risen by over 500 and 300 percent respectively in Yemen's most affected governorates, in comparison to pre-conflict levels, while prices of all commodities continue to rise across the country.

The Task Force on Population Movements estimated that as of December 2015, there were approximately 2.5 million internally displaced people (IDPs) across Yemen. IDPs continued to be the most vulnerable segment of Yemen's population, and the most food insecure. Due to ongoing instability in the Horn of Africa, migrants continue to arrive in Yemen, and as of December, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that there were more than 264,000 refugees in Yemen in need of urgent protection assistance.

Yemen continues to perform poorly in terms of gender equality, and has ranked lowest (145) on the Global Gender Gap Index for nine years in a row, most recently in 2015. As income opportunities have been severely reduced, compounded by disruptions to basic social services, the effects of the conflict have been severest on women and households headed by women.

In 2015, the socio-political situation was dominated by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition and the government's air and ground military campaign against Houthi forces.

Summary Of WFP Assistance

With the escalation of the conflict in Yemen in March, the country was upgraded by the United Nations to a "Level 3" humanitarian emergency in July 2015. Even before that, WFP had prioritised the provision of immediate life-saving assistance, beginning general food distribution in all accessible governorates in March. To do so, between March and October, WFP shifted the focus of its Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO 200636, launched in mid-2014) from recovery and resilience to emergency food distribution and nutrition interventions for acutely malnourished Yemenis. WFP worked with 15 cooperating partners (CPs), including the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Public Health and Population, to deliver food to prioritised areas.

To better respond to the rapidly evolving security and humanitarian situation, WFP transferred its lifesaving activities to a dedicated Emergency Operation (EMOP 200890) in October, with the aim of assisting 4 million people with GFD over an initial six-month period. The EMOP provided nutrition support, consisting of interventions to treat and prevent acute, chronic and micronutrient malnutrition in children under 5 and pregnant and nursing mothers. An adaptable response mechanism to leverage existing market capacity and private sector supply chain networks through a commodity voucher modality was also contemplated in 2015. With the start of the EMOP, PRRO 200636 was frozen, and closed on 31 December 2015 when it became clear that the PRRO was no longer equipped to address the fundamentally altered humanitarian reality in Yemen. Consequently, WFP's humanitarian relief response was consolidated under the EMOP.

The EMOP was in line with WFP's Strategic Objective 1, to save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies, and with the 2014-15 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan, revised in June 2015.

Refugees arriving from the Horn of Africa received assistance under PRRO 200305, which provided emergency food assistance to new refugee arrivals, refugees hosted in the Kharaz refugee camp in Lahj governorate, and urban refugees, totaling 20,000 beneficiaries per month over three years.

WFP led the Logistics Cluster and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters, and coordinated humanitarian air services, transportation, telecommunications and the provision and storage of fuel for humanitarian agencies throughout Yemen under three Special Operations: 200798, 200841, and 200845.

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	844,774	756,550	1,601,324
Children (5-18 years)	1,469,920	1,381,537	2,851,457
Adults (18 years plus)	2,294,704	2,118,572	4,413,276
Total number of beneficiaries in 2015	4,609,398	4,256,659	8,866,057

Distribution (mt)						
Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Single Country EMOP	46,189	3,132	4,159	87	0	53,567
Single Country PRRO	127,666	7,487	11,268	12,131	3,850	162,402
Total Food Distributed in 2015	173,854	10,618	15,427	12,218	3,850	215,968

OPERATIONAL SPR

Operational Objectives and Relevance

The objective of Special Operation (SO 200845) was to provide safe and reliable air transport services through the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS). This took place in the context of an escalating conflict and severe constraints on the ability of humanitarian staff to enter and exit Yemen. These services were supplied to United Nations agencies, NGOs, donor organizations and diplomatic missions in Yemen, to ensure a continuous humanitarian response to the crisis in Yemen. The operation aimed to provide an efficient means for light cargo such as medical supplies, high-energy foods, and information and communications technology equipment to be transported into Yemen.

Following a rapid deterioration in the security and humanitarian situation in March, and subsequent evacuation of all international United Nations staff in April, there emerged a critical need for a dedicated UNHAS service as a key part of the response strategy in Yemen. The operation therefore aimed to create an air bridge between Djibouti and Sana'a for an initial period of three months in order to facilitate a means for humanitarian workers to move in and out of Yemen, until the resumption of international commercial flights. The operation, which built upon Special Operation 200130 (Air Passenger Service and Logistics Cluster Coordination in Support of the Humanitarian Response in Yemen), allowed WFP, in its capacity as the custodian of UNHAS, to support operational continuity for humanitarian actors to respond to the crisis in Yemen.

The objectives of the operation were linked to WFP's Strategic Objective 1: saving lives and protecting livelihoods in emergencies.

Results

Outputs

From April onward, UNHAS saw an increase in requests for flights into and out of Yemen; this stemmed from a combination of restricted air travel options, despite the continuation of commercial Yemenia flights operating from Aden airport in August. The United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) did not permit United Nations staff to travel on of the Yemenia flights. WFP was able to fulfill the vast majority of air transport requests from over 42 humanitarian organizations, maintaining a schedule of five flights each week between Djibouti, Sana'a and Aden. The number of user organisations was slightly lower than anticipated given that a large number of international NGOs had not returned to Sana'a with the United Nations agencies following the evacuation of international actors in April, and a number of organisations that had planned to establish ground operations in Yemen chose to operate remotely from outside Yemen instead. For this same reason, UNHAS carried an average of 320 passengers per month, moderately lower than the anticipated 350 passengers per month. Passengers were transported on an average of 13 flights per month, despite operational challenges related to the political and security situation in Yemen. UNHAS flights took place subject to operational window slots granted by Saudi Arabia-led coalition forces, and the attainment of landing permits. Flights were disrupted due to damage caused by airstrikes targeting Sana'a airport. However, throughout 2015, UNHAS held a crucial role to WFP's scaling-up in Yemen, and as of December, WFP was in the process of securing a direct UNHAS route between Sana'a and Amman that would further improve operational continuity for the humanitarian community in Yemen.

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
SO1: Special Operation (Air Ops)				
Average no. of passengers transported monthly by air	individual	350	320	91.4
Average weight of light cargo transported monthly	Mt	2	1	93.3
Number of agencies and organizations using humanitarian air services	agency/organization	50	44	88.0

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
Number of flights operated	flight	160	150	93.8
Number of passengers transported	individual	4,500	4,100	91.1
Number of requests for air transportation (passenger) fulfilled	instance	3,000	2,561	85.4
Number of services provided	service	2	2	100.0
Quantity (mt) of cargo transported	Mt	210	200	95.2
Tonnage of light cargo transported monthly	Mt	13	12	92.3

Outcomes

Through this Special Operation, the humanitarian community was able to access vulnerable and conflict-affected populations in Yemen. By providing humanitarian actors a critical transport link into Yemen, the operation preserved the operational integrity of the international humanitarian response in Yemen, while making it possible for urgent and sensitive light cargo, such as emergency telecommunications equipment and medical supplies, to be transported into Yemen rapidly and safely. UNHAS played a crucial role during the evacuation of international United Nations staff in April, providing a dedicated and flexible service with which to respond to the highly dynamic political and security situation. Through the operation, UNHAS further facilitated the transportation of high-level United Nations officials, such as the United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy for Yemen, United Nations agency directors and donor organizations into Yemen, enhancing the visibility of the Yemeni crisis.

Management

Partnerships

The UNHAS service was expected to support more than 40 organizations including NGOs, United Nations agencies, donor institutions and the diplomatic community to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of humanitarian activities. The WFP UNHAS User Group Committee, composed of United Nations agencies, NGOs and donor representatives located in Sana'a, met monthly to discuss and agree upon standard operating procedures (SOPs), flight rates and schedules.

Lessons Learned

Given the complex security situation in Yemen, pre-planned and scheduled UNHAS flights were cancelled twice due to the denial or withdrawal of operational window slots by coalition authorities. While these situations were largely unavoidable, UNHAS sought to mitigate the effects of cancelled flights through the regular dissemination of updates, through emails, to the user community.

WFP continued to provide updates on the activities along with regular interaction in the form of meetings, particularly through the increased number of Logistics Cluster coordination meetings in Djibouti and Sana'a. To mitigate passengers not adhering to scheduled flights, UNHAS introduced a policy of charging the full ticket price for cancellations or those not turning up for their flights to the reserving organizations, when they had not notified WFP and UNHAS 24 hours in advance of the scheduled flights. In addition, continuous communication with the operator, Blue Bird Aviation, ensured the availability of aircraft for WFP air operations.

To mitigate against the risk of airstrikes (given that Sana'a Airport had been, and continues to be a target), UNHAS adhered to a strict regime of requesting operational slots at Sana'a Airport from coalition authorities at least 48 hours before each scheduled flight. This served to de-conflict UNHAS flights and to ensure that Sana'a Airport was not targeted by airstrikes during the designated operational window slots. UNHAS worked in close coordination with the Humanitarian Coordination Team, comprised of United Nations and non-United Nations humanitarian organizations operating in the Yemen context, UNDSS and other relevant international bodies to ensure timely

communication of the security situation at destinations. Operational hazard identification was constantly implemented through the established WFP aviation structure, and in November, real-time satellite tracking of UNHAS flights was introduced as a mitigation measure to keep an acceptable level of risk.