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Fighting Hunger Worldwide

Special Operation - Logistics Cluster and Emergency Telecommunications Support in Iraq

Standard Project Report 2016

World Food Programme in Iraq, Republic of (IQ)

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Country Context and WFP Objectives

Country Context

Throughout 2016, Iraq witnessed an escalation in the conflict between Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and fighters from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). This fighting has left three million people displaced and 2.4 million unable to meet their dietary needs and food preferences since 2014. With a total population of 37.9 million, this means that almost 10 percent of Iraqis fled their home in recent years. This has had a particularly large impact on households headed by women, who face additional challenges related to culture and displacement. Further evidence of the difficulties women in Iraq face is shown by the Gender Inequality Index on which Iraq ranks 123rd out of 155 countries. Between June 2014 and the end of 2016, 23,000 civilians lost their lives through acts of terrorism, violence or armed conflict in Iraq [1], and thousands more have been forcibly evicted from areas such as Kirkuk.

While dozens of villages, towns and cities across the governorates of Anbar, Ninewa and Salah al-Din were battered by fighting, the headlines were dominated by the battle for Mosul. These battles often led to the rapid need for food assistance, which WFP was able to provide in coordination with the Public Distribution System (PDS) from the Ministry of Trade alongside the Ministry of Displacement and Migration. Ninewa governorate, which includes the Mosul area, was previously known as the breadbasket of Iraq, with 46 percent of Iraq's arable land in the governorate alone [2]. Value added from agriculture amounted to about 4 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2014, before the crisis [3]. With ISIL controlling much of this area since June 2014, the negative impact on Iraq's agricultural sector has been substantial.

The economic situation remained stagnant for much of the year, with Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil prices slow to recover from lows of USD 27 per barrel in January 2016 to USD 48 per barrel in October 2016 [4]. Large swaths of oil fields in northern Iraq also remained under ISIL control for a large portion of the year. With 65 percent of government revenue in Iraq generated by the hydrocarbon sector [5], its importance to the economy cannot be overstated. While not as high for other demographics, increased strain has been put on the Government of Iraq's social safety nets throughout 2016; the poverty rate in 2016 was around 19 percent [6]. In addition to these challenges, 225,000 Syrian refugees in Iraq are still unable to return home.

Within this perfect storm of widespread conflict and fiscal crisis, WFP's assistance has had to be flexible around the country, adjusting modalities according to security, market accessibility and the needs of the people. Access to food was the biggest challenge for the hundreds of thousands of people who fled their homes over the course of the year. On the other hand, having long been a middle income country, there are strong market infrastructures in many parts of Iraq. As long as security prevailed, local economies just needed a boost, through a cash-based injection of capital.

The complex military and economic situation in Iraq throughout 2016 has contributed to further political challenges. Infighting, corruption allegations, the impeachment of several ministers and huge protests around the country are symptoms of an unstable political system.

In this context, WFP has been focused on saving lives and protecting livelihoods in Iraq [7] in an effort to support the people of Iraq achieve zero hunger [8].

[1] UNAMI Website, Civilian Casualties, 2016

[2] UNHABITAT, City Profile of Mosul, Iraq: City Under Siege, , October 2016

[3] World Bank Website, Iraq Profile, 2016

[4] OPEC Website, Global Basket Prices, 2016

[5] UNDP Website, About Iraq, 2016

[6] World Bank Website, Iraq Profile, 2016

[7] WFP Strategic Objective 1

[8] UN Sustainable Development Goal 2

Response of the Government and Strategic Coordination

On 01 January 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) came into force, following their historic endorsement by world leaders in September 2015. Since then, WFP has worked with many partners to contribute to ending poverty and hunger, empowering women, promoting an inclusive society and strengthening partnerships in Iraq [1].

Vital to reducing the suffering of those living without an adequate diet or healthy food preferences in Iraq is the partnership between WFP and the Government of Iraq. WFP works closely with the Ministry of Trade to coordinate food distributions alongside the Public Distribution System (PDS). The PDS was introduced in 1991 as a safety net that would help Iraqis through the international embargo following the Gulf War that year. PDS cards are available to all Iraqi families regardless of their income level and provide monthly access to basic food items. Collaboration between WFP and the PDS ensures timely and complementary assistance goes where it is needed, when it is needed. WFP worked with the central Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government throughout 2016 on the Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA). This included training 400 government enumerators and giving technical assistance with methodology. The assessment will help provide a deeper understanding of the state of food security across Iraq and offer a baseline for future planning.

For WFP in Iraq, those receiving assistance, whether displaced Iraqis or Syrian refugees, are key to improving assistance. For this reason, the Communicating with Communities (CwC) mechanism plays a vital role in ensuring accountability to affected populations by engaging beneficiaries to inform them of programmatic changes, assisting in two-way communications and increasing understanding of WFP assistance. This accountability is a key feature of the United Nations Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity, based on the World Humanitarian Summit which took place in May 2016. Recommendations from CwC are shared and discussed with programme, allowing WFP to build a case for changes to programme design where possible. As an example, based on CwC focus group recommendations, it was found that income generation opportunities for women were very low due to cultural limitations in accessing jobs. Consequently, the targeting criteria was adjusted to include female adults as dependents whereas previous they were counted as breadwinners.

Progress towards ending poverty and hunger is also achieved through close cooperation with other United Nations agencies. The Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) is the first line of assistance provided to families fleeing conflict or areas under Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) control. Co-led by WFP, the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Rapid Response Mechanism gets ready-to-eat food, hygiene kits and female dignity kits to conflict-affected people within 72 hours of being notified, followed by the provision of monthly Family Food Rations.

Through the cluster system, WFP helped alleviate the suffering of over one million Iraqis on a monthly basis in 2016. In leading the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) and the Logistics Cluster, and co-leading the Food Security Cluster alongside the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), WFP partners with international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This is an important forum for information sharing and capacity development with local stakeholders, who are key to improving living conditions inside Iraq.

As co-lead of the Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) network in Iraq, alongside UNFPA, WFP is striving to improve the lives of the all food insecure people in the country.

[1] These echo SDGs 1, 2, 5, 16 and 17.

Summary of WFP Operational Objectives

All WFP projects in Iraq are in line with the organization's Strategic Objective 1: 'To save lives and livelihoods in emergencies.' Much of the country has been embattled since early 2014, when Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) fighters pushed into Anbar governorate and took control over 40 percent of the country. With over three million displaced Iraqis, 225,000 Syrian refugees in the country and shattered infrastructure in some areas, much focus has been on helping Iraq get back to a position where it can build for the future, when the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) could become a reality. As 2016 progressed, the battle for Mosul very much came to the foreground of the humanitarian community's attention, with WFP taking a frontline role in providing assistance to people affected by the conflict.

EMOP 200677: Approved budget USD 793 million (2014-2016).

In order to support families displaced from their homes and help inject money into an economy that was hit hard by the slump in oil prices, this emergency operation provided different forms of assistance as a flexible response to conflict-affected Iraqis depending on local conditions. Ready-to-eat Immediate Response Rations (IRRs), monthly Family Food Rations (FFRs) and monthly disbursements of Cash-Based Transfers (CBTs) were provided to affected people across the country. This EMOP has been key to filling gaps in the Government's Public Distribution System (PDS) assistance across all governorates.

EMOP 200433: Approved budget USD 3.2 billion (2012-2016).

As part of the regional response to assist Syrian refugees fleeing their homeland, WFP assisted over 50,000 Syrians assessed to be most food insecure in Iraq on a monthly basis. All were in the nine refugee camps in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I). The main focus was on providing stable assistance through CBTs, as they offer more choice and provide greater dignity to beneficiaries.

SO 200746: Approved budget USD 31 million (2014-2016).

In its capacity as the lead agency for the Logistics and Emergency Telecommunications Clusters, WFP facilitated the delivery of humanitarian assistance and augmented the emergency telecommunications capacity of the humanitarian community. The work of both clusters was vital to ensuring assistance reached the families who needed it in a timely manner.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

Through flexible funding, strengthening partnerships and improving logistics processes, WFP operations in Iraq are increasingly showing a commitment to providing value for money. Thanks to WFP's donors to Iraq, EMOP 200677 was 65.5% funded which allowed for the successful implementation of programming to provide food assistance to Iraqis including the scale-up of cash-based assistance, and increases to transfer values and ration amounts. This is in line with WFP's commitment to the Grand Bargain that emerged from the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, ahead of the World Humanitarian Summit in May. In sum, these commitments aim to secure further assistance for those people in need of food assistance. Overall, monitoring showed that food security improved over the year while usage of negative coping strategies decreased. WFP's own human capital has been vital to getting assistance to those who need it most.

WFP scaled up funding requirements and logistics capacities in 2016 in preparation to respond to mass displacement from Anbar initially, and later from Mosul. Food was pre-positioned with cooperating partners to provide prompt assistance to those fleeing conflict, including towns and villages that had recently been retaken from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). As a result, monitoring indicated that the food security of families in hard-to-reach areas increased over the course of the year.

Advance financing, funding not earmarked for specific assistance and multi-year funding, all helped improve the effectiveness, economy and efficiency of WFP assistance. With greater funding flexibility, WFP was able to provide assistance depending on the needs of displaced Iraqis, which varied from location to location.

The strengthening of WFP's administrative unit in Iraq has enabled the development of more efficient processes and increased accountability within the organisation. Support on Information Technology (IT) has been improved, with more IT staff, more effective support for all staff and the roll-out of the electronic SCOPE platform, all allowing for more time and money to be spent directly assisting the Iraqi people. SCOPE is WFP's beneficiary and transfer management platform, which helps improve the security and efficiency of WFP operations.

With the onset of the Mosul offensive towards the end of the year, the additional deployment of staff was needed in order to support an anticipated additional one million people requiring food assistance. Providing surge capacity, over 30 staff joined WFP in Iraq on temporary duty, allowing WFP to be ready to support families fleeing Mosul and the surrounding areas. Over the course of the year, there was an increase in the number of women field monitors working for WFP in Iraq, compared with 2015. This helped to improve feedback from female beneficiaries as more female field monitors were available to talk to, while building an important precondition for WFP to support gender equality in Iraq.

The security situation in Iraq is a key obstacle that stands in the way of WFP and its cooperating partners getting food assistance to those who need it most. The purchase of additional armoured vehicles and the recruitment of extra security staff enabled WFP to reach areas it previously had not been able to reach. That said, the security situation in parts of Anbar, Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Kirkuk interrupted WFP distributions several times during the year. By working closely with Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and other United Nations agencies, WFP strived to quickly resume distributions once security was restored.

Achievements at Country Level

The year 2016 began with the push for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. WFP took a leading role in working towards zero hunger in Iraq, while building strong partnerships to support the achievement of the SDGs.

While operating in a complex and unstable security environment, WFP was able to provide vital assistance to an average of one million food insecure people across the country each month, regularly reaching over ninety percent of families targeted with assistance. WFP monitoring found that Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees became increasingly food secure over the course of the year, with fewer vulnerable families having to go hungry.

WFP changed its procurement strategy in order to improve efficiency and value for money and ensured that vital assistance continued to reach the most vulnerable families. Innovations such as mobile monitoring and the implementation of the SCOPE platform allowed WFP to be flexible and more precise in responding to food needs around the country. For example, by digitising recipient data, WFP was able to more easily remove duplications and update lists, helping ensure food assistance got to those who needed it most. The increase in female staff working

around Iraq also enabled WFP to better respond to the specific needs of many Iraqi women.

Conflict and insecurity posed perhaps the greatest challenge to ensuring food reached those who needed it. Partnerships were a key way of maximising access to people who were fleeing their homes, particularly from cities such as Fallujah and Mosul, and were vital to providing assistance. WFP co-led the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) with the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), worked closely with the Government on the Public Distribution System (PDS) and collaborated with local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) wherever possible through the humanitarian cluster system.

In addition, WFP engaged in various capacity-building activities with the Government, partnering with the Central Statistics Organisation (CSO) and the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office (KRSO) to conduct the first Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) done in almost a decade. This will help refine and improve food security assistance around the country, providing a key lifeline for many Iraqis.

Beneficiary figures are based on Iraq national statistics, which show there are slightly more males than females.

Annual Country Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	125,309	110,161	235,470
Children (5-18 years)	249,569	233,243	482,812
Adults (18 years plus)	428,114	420,780	848,894
Total number of beneficiaries in 2016	802,992	764,184	1,567,176

Country Beneficiaries by Gender and Age

Legend:
- Children (under 5 years)
- Children (5-18 years)
- Adults (18 years plus)
- Children (under 5 years)
- Children (5-18 years)
- Adults (18 years plus)
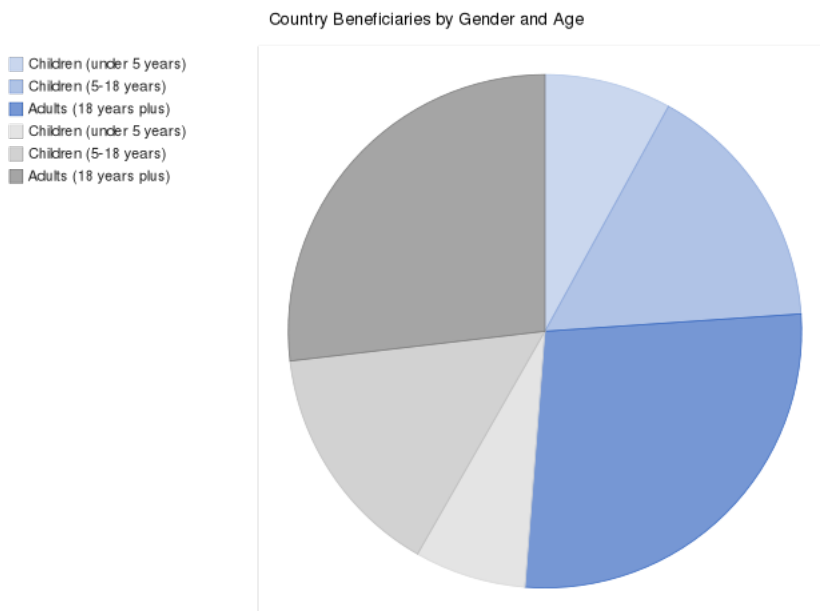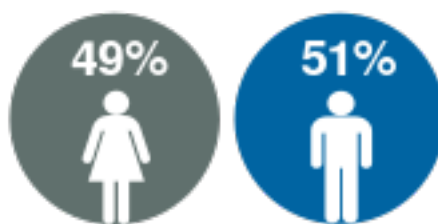
Annual Food Distribution in Country (mt)

Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Regional EMOP	-	-	-	-	424	424
Single Country EMOP	67,558	6,729	14,117	145	14,638	103,188
Total Food Distributed in 2016	**67,558**	**6,729**	**14,117**	**145**	**15,063**	**103,612**

Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher Distribution (USD)

Project Type	Cash	Value Voucher	Commodity Voucher
Regional EMOP	173,403	10,091,021	-
Single Country EMOP	14,731,214	31,316,787	-
Total Distributed in 2016	**14,904,617**	**41,407,809**	**-**

Supply Chain

While the overall infrastructure in Iraq, including airports, road networks and ports, are well established and in generally good condition, the security situation has posed a major challenge to providing assistance to people in need. While the Ibrahim Khalil crossing with Turkey was the only border point used in 2016, alternative supply routes through Iran, Kuwait and Iraq's southern port were assessed in order to mitigate against the risk of the potential closure of Iraq's northern border with Turkey.

The movement of trucks and goods was a challenge for WFP, as road closures, security restrictions and conflict hindered the movement of food to vulnerable families. In order to overcome this, WFP strategically positioned logistics hubs in Dohuk, Erbil and Baghdad to be as close as possible to the final distribution points (FDPs) and cooperating partners' extended delivery points (EDPs).

Through the three logistics hubs, food and non-food items (NFIs) were easily dispatched to camps and distribution points. The Dohuk hub was vital to reaching the north of Ninewa governorate, where Mosul is located. Areas in the Mosul corridor, south of the city, were reached from Erbil and Baghdad.

WFP contracted transporter companies to move all commodities around the country by road. Over the course of the year, the total amount transported was 132,000 mt. By increasing the number of contracted transport companies, WFP was able to reduce the transport rate to different parts of the country, a key factor in improving value for money and getting more donor money to the people who need assistance. As Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) made headway against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the governorates of Anbar and Ninewa, Requests for Offers (RFOs) were floated to enable much-needed food assistance to reach additional areas.

As part of WFP's increase in voucher distributions, ten staff were trained on the retailers' assessment and reconciliation procedures. Technical support for cash-based transfer (CBT) distributions by WFP for partners is ongoing, particularly in the areas of retailer and shop assessments and ensuring CBT disbursements go smoothly. WFP engaged in a retail strategy mission for refugee camp voucher shops in an effort to increase purchasing power of assisted households by working with retailers to reduce prices. This is followed up with regular price monitoring conducted by WFP.

Most food procurement was carried out regionally, mainly from Turkey. This is due to the competitive prices in Turkey and the fact that Iraq imports almost all goods that comprise WFP assistance from abroad due to limited manufacturing and agricultural capacity in Iraq.

The purchasing of stock was harmonised, where possible, with procurement for WFP's Syria office. This allowed bulk buying and faster purchasing of sugar, rice, salt, bulgur, chickpeas, oil, flour and wheat flour. This more efficient process introduced further cost savings to WFP's operations in Iraq. The cooperation between WFP operations in Iraq and Syria allowed for Food Supply Agreements (FSAs) that required suppliers to have enough stock on hand to facilitate a rapid response to any increase in demand for WFP assistance.

By applying best practices, WFP limited post-delivery losses related to the expiry of commodities and to transport losses. Moreover, WFP was actively engaged with the packaging of procured commodities to reduce overland transport losses. The training of warehouse staff and cooperating partner staff particularly helped to mitigate losses.

The supply chain unit responded to the Iraqi Security Force's Mosul offensive by augmenting its existing operation. National and international staff were recruited for logistics, procurement and resource management. Warehouse capacity was scaled-up to 42,000 mt, with 30 mobile storage units added to strengthen WFP and partner capacity, mostly in newly-established camps. WFP released a request for quotations (RFQ) to establish transport rates along new routes in order to adapt to the changing situation.

In September, WFP changed its food delivery processes in order to reduce costs. As of the end of December, these processes were under evaluation and the findings will confirm whether there has been a reduction in the Landside Transport, Storage and Handling (LTSH) rate.

The Logistics Cluster is active in Iraq and facilitates transport authorizations, customs procedures and common storage to improve the effectiveness of WFP's supply chain. By innovating and investing in the supply chain, WFP has been able to help the most vulnerable people get the assistance they need.

Annual Food Purchases for the Country (mt)

Commodity	Local	Regional/International	Total
Beans	-	6,149	6,149
Biscuits	1,019	-	1,019
Bulgur Wheat	-	9,983	9,983
Canned Chicken	748	-	748
Canned Pulses	764	-	764
Chickpeas	764	5,911	6,675
Dried Fruits	764	-	764
Iodised Salt	-	1,574	1,574

Commodity	Local	Regional/International	Total
Lentils	-	5,106	5,106
Rice	-	28,986	28,986
Sugar	-	9,469	9,469
Vegetable Oil	-	8,845	8,845
Wheat Flour	-	50,269	50,269
Total	**4,058**	**126,291**	**130,350**
Percentage	**3.1%**	**96.9%**	

Annual Global Commodity Management Facility Purchases Received in Country (mt)

Commodity	Total
Ready To Use Supplementary Food	450
Total	**450**

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

An evaluation of WFP's activities in Iraq between 2010 and 2015 took place in early 2016. The evaluation found that due to the rapidly evolving situation in Iraq, WFP's 2010-2014 Country Strategy and 2010-2015 portfolio were no longer relevant. WFP interventions were deemed to be well-aligned with humanitarian needs, with WFP utilising its logistics expertise effectively. Partnerships with other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGO) were well received, but there was some concern about WFP's support for the Government of Iraq's social safety net activities.

The evaluation recommended that WFP prepare a new country strategy, considering the protracted nature of displacement in Iraq. In line with WFP's Integrated Road Map, WFP will be developing a Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (TICSP) in 2017. The new country strategic plan will be developed over the course of 2017 and implemented in 2018.

Further food security assessments were recommended, in addition to the Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) conducted in 2016. WFP is carrying out regular assessments, including mobile monitoring in parts of Mosul. WFP agreed with the recommendation to resolve outstanding issues related to the previous school meals programme by the end of 2017.

Based on the recommendations to increase cash assistance, WFP will work to expand the provision of the cash modality where possible, including by conducting market assessments to determine feasibility, security assessments, communicating with communities to determine how cash assistance could affect the household.

The recruitment of key staff was agreed upon, particularly in the areas of monitoring & evaluation (M&E) and vulnerability, analysis and mapping (VAM). VAM and M&E recruitment is either complete or underway. A further recommendation to strengthen WFP's talent pool with regards to emergency M&E deployments was well received by management. In general, WFP is addressing the issue of high staff turnover by recruiting more national officers in 2017.

Improved communications with the Government of Iraq, partners and the families receiving WFP assistance were recommended by the evaluation. WFP is implementing quarterly reviews of feedback mechanisms which will ensure WFP acts upon feedback from those receiving assistance - these include improvements to accountability mechanisms and distribution processes.

Project Objectives and Results

Project Objectives

Special Operation 200746 began in 2014 in response to the deteriorating security situation in Iraq, which resulted in widespread violence and mass displacement. It was further extended until December 2016 due to the ongoing crisis and based on humanitarian needs. Budget Revision (BR) 6 was approved in December 2016, in reference to 2017, to cover additional operational requirements for the Mosul response.

Through this Special Operation, the Logistics Cluster and the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster, both led by WFP, aimed to support the humanitarian community in responding to the increased needs of families in Iraq. Both clusters facilitated the delivery of vital assistance to Syrian refugees and Iraqi internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Based on the needs identified and expressed by the humanitarian community, the Logistics Cluster aimed to facilitate sufficient and reliable logistics services and consolidated information related to capacities and constraints. The Logistics Cluster aimed to enhance the ability of the humanitarian community to deliver relief items to hard-to-reach locations, ensuring a timely and uninterrupted supply of life-saving assistance to affected people.

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster objectives were identified as providing timely and effective information and communications technology (ICT) services to the humanitarian community. These services aimed to improve response and coordination; enhance the operational security situation for staff and assets and facilitate decision-making by enabling access to critical information. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster supported efficient emergency communications coordination and information management to ensure a swift response and avoid the duplication of efforts. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster further sought to provide internet connectivity directly to affected populations to enable the community to have access to vital communications services and digital aid.

The objectives of both the Logistics Cluster and the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster in Iraq were in line with the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan and linked to WFP Strategic Objective 1: 'Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies'. In line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 on partnerships, both clusters enabled humanitarian organisations to work more efficiently and safely, ultimately assisting more people and saving more lives.

Approved Budget for Project Duration (USD)

Cost Category	
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	27,800,955
Direct Support Costs	1,604,858
Indirect Support Costs	2,058,407
Total	**31,464,221**

Project Activities

Strategic Objective 1: Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies.

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Outcome: Strengthen the capacity of governments and regional organisations and enable the international community to prepare for, assess and respond to shocks.

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Activity: Provide secure telecommunications and internet connectivity infrastructure and services in five common operational areas.

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster provided security telecommunications services at five sites and managed communication centres (COMCEN) in three of those sites: Erbil, Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah. These services supported the safety and security of staff and assets. Emergency Telecommunications Cluster internet

connectivity was provided to two sites, while both internet connectivity and common security telecommunications services were accessible in COMCENs. Almost 200 humanitarian workers registered to access the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster internet service since the start of the operation in 2014.

Regular maintenance missions were conducted to existing sites to ensure that services were not interrupted. Assessment missions were carried out when necessary. For example, to prepare for the Mosul operation, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster carried out assessment missions to Tikrit, Zummar and Qayyarah to determine needs on the ground. Following the assessment to Qayyarah, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster provided security telecommunications services at four sites in and around Qayyarah, and internet connectivity in a separate location. Equipment was preconfigured and ready to deploy in more sites if and when needed.

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Activity: Ensure dedicated Emergency Telecommunications Cluster coordinator and information management officer.

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster deployed a full-time coordinator inside Iraq and a dedicated information management officer, based in Dubai, sharing regular and accurate operational information and products with partners and the wider response community.

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Activity: Provide Emergency Telecommunications and bespoke training to humanitarians and partners.

Given the escalating situation in Mosul, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster held radio training upon request for whichever United Nations agency or non-governmental organisation (NGO) requested, ensuring humanitarian workers understood how to operate very high frequency (VHF) radios.

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Activity: Services for Communities.

For the first time in its history, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster provided internet connectivity directly to the affected community. This is part of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster's wider strategy to ensure that by 2020 all those affected by and responding to humanitarian emergencies have access to vital communications services. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster is providing Internet connectivity directly to Syrian Refugees in the UNFPA Youth Centre and the Internet café it established in a UNHCR site in Domiz camp. Internet access will enable the affected community to continue their education online, access humanitarian distribution schedules and contact their loved ones.

Logistics Cluster Outcome: Support an effective humanitarian logistics response by providing logistics coordination and information management services to the humanitarian community.

Logistics Cluster Activity: Conduct regular coordination meetings in logistics hubs.

Coordination meetings with partner organisations were held in the three main hubs of Erbil, Dohuk and Baghdad. The frequency of these meetings depended on the rapidly evolving situation and the need for constant updates. Coordination among clusters increased along with operational requirements. The Logistics Cluster liaised with authorities and relevant national and international partners to raise any issues of common concern regarding logistics and humanitarian access.

Logistics Cluster Activity: Provide information products on updated logistics situation in country – including situation reports, logistics assessments, snapshots and activity reports.

Regular updates on logistics bottlenecks, access constraints and the main humanitarian developments were shared through different communication platforms. This ensured a timely flow of information, sharing knowledge among humanitarian actors.

Logistics Cluster outcome: Ensure uninterrupted delivery of relief assistance by augmenting humanitarian actors' capacities through the provision of emergency storage, transport and emergency airlifts.

Logistics Cluster Activity: Operate common storage facilities and provide Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) in support of rapid up-scaling/contingency/prepositioning operations.

The Logistics Cluster expanded its storage capacity to address the lack of storage space and to be able to meet increasing operational needs. Storage capacity was expanded from the three main logistics hubs of Baghdad, Erbil and Dohuk at the beginning of 2016 to six hubs, which include Tikrit, Bardarash, Owinat, and additional common storage facilities were set up in Khazer/Hassan Sham, Jada'a, Qayyarah Airstrip and Hajj displacement camps. New warehouses were opened to facilitate the prepositioning of items and distributions to displacement sites.

Airlift operations and emergency inter-agency transportation were not implemented as they were not deemed necessary and there were too many security constraints. The airlift and inter-agency transportation components were included as contingency measures in the Logistics Cluster framework of activities and budget as both were to be activated depending on the needs and requests from partner organisations. However, during 2016 no request was submitted for airlift operations or inter-agency convoys.

Operational Partnerships

Partnerships were integral to WFP in this operation, providing reliable augmentation of logistics and telecommunication services to the humanitarian community. This marked progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 17 on partnerships. Contributions from donors enabled the clusters to remain operational in 2016 and, in some instances, exceed targets.

Both clusters benefited from personnel support from the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, that sent specialized officers to support the operation for Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and mapping, logistics coordination and telecommunications technical activities. Two additional specialists were deployed to conduct assessments on areas most likely to be impacted by the growing humanitarian cargo volume, including border crossings and airports.

The Logistics Cluster has a network of over 70 partner organisations, including nine United Nations agencies and 11 national non-governmental organisations (NGOs), that benefit from the services provided, including coordination, information management and logistics services. Four implementing partners managed Logistics Cluster storage facilities in different hubs. Of the four implementing partners managing the logistics hubs in Baghdad, Tikrit and Qayyarah, one is a national NGO. Support was provided to United Nations agencies and international and national NGOs in receiving, handling and storing humanitarian commodities, including food, shelter and medicine.

The Logistics Cluster coordinated with numerous national and local organisations, worked with other clusters and liaised and coordinated with authorities to define and establish a one-stop shop (OSS) for simplified customs and clearance procedures across the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I). The OSS was first established in 2016 in collaboration with the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre (JCC) to cover the KR-I. If successful, this will be expanded to the rest of Iraq to address issues related to customs clearance with the central government, as well as the internal movement of goods. Initial feedback from humanitarian actors using OSS services was positive, with time required to obtain clearances being reduced.

For the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster, WFP partnered with Ericsson Response, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Telecoms Sans Frontieres. An Emergency Telecommunications Cluster technician managed and maintained the equipment.

For the Services for Communities project in Domiz camp, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster signed letters of agreement with UNFPA to enable the provision of internet to refugees. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster worked closely with the affected community to plan and host the launch event in November.

Performance Monitoring

The Global Logistics Cluster commissioned an extensive Lessons Learned exercise in June to assess the performance of activities undertaken by the Logistics Cluster in Iraq. The exercise sought to identify best practices and areas for improvement to be replicated across operations globally. Twenty key stakeholders were interviewed, while 40 users and 11 Logistics Cluster staff took part in online surveys and a 12 day mission was conducted in August. By the end of the year, the results of this exercise were being taken into account and actively pursued in moving forward with Logistics Cluster operations. The exercise highlighted the good performance and relevance of the Logistics Cluster in terms of information management, coordination and logistics services provided to the humanitarian community. It stressed the need to enhance the leadership and advocacy role of the Logistics Cluster, while asserting its competitive advantage and fostering a broader participatory approach.

The Logistics Cluster held at least five coordination meetings a month in key locations, providing a platform for participating organizations to give and receive feedback, particularly on the activities of the Logistics Cluster and it's effectiveness. The Logistics Cluster maintained open communication channels with participating organisations, including a dedicated mailing list with over 500 recipients and a Skype group with over 200 members.

The Logistics Cluster coordinator and other key staff carried out frequent site visits to key locations, such as the common storage facilities, to receive direct feedback from the implementing and participating partners.

The Logistics Cluster conducts online user feedback surveys at least once a year in order to receive feedback from partners on how well the cluster is fulfilling its mandate, if the partners' needs are being met and what the cluster can do to improve its effectiveness.

The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set by the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster included the number of operational areas where the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster provided Internet connectivity and security telecommunications services; number of information management items produced; number of global and local Emergency Telecommunications Cluster meetings conducted; number of humanitarian personnel that receive Emergency Telecommunications Cluster training; and the number of radio operators recruited and deployed.

Emergency Telecommuncations Cluster member Ericsson Response's Wireless LAN in Disaster and Emergency Response (WIDER) system distributes and manages Internet connectivity which allows the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster to monitor how many humanitarians are accessing its Internet services.

Results/Outcomes

The Logistics Cluster performed very well on all project indicators, demonstrating considerably higher than expected outputs. Largely in support of operations in Mosul and the increased needs of the humanitarian community, the Logistics Cluster more than tripled the expected common storage facilities available, almost doubled the number of organisations expected to use logistics services, more than doubled the expected number of coordination meetings, and produced and published more than three times the expected information management products.

These increases resulted in fewer interruptions to supply chains of relief cargo for participating organisations, more frequently updated logistics information, and more space to store critically needed relief items and equipment in, or in close vicinity to, emergency sites. These services consequently helped expand the operational reach and presence of humanitarian partners in Iraq, as per the Logistics Cluster Humanitarian Response Plan. Airlift operations and emergency inter-agency convoys were not implemented as they were not found to be necessary in relation to access and security.

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster performed well across all indicators in 2016. In response to the increased need coinciding with the Mosul operation, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster increased the number of operational areas where it provided vital communications services to the humanitarian community, further contributing to the increase in the number of information management products that were developed. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster also installed security telecommunications and data equipment in a Mercy Hands office in Qayyarah. These services are also accessible in Qayyarah Jad'ah, Qayyarah Airstrip camp and Hajj Ali. In a volatile context, it was essential to maintain the radio operators in the Communications Centres (COMCEN) to ensure the safety and security of staff. As such, a radio training was carried out, on topics such as radio programming. Additionally, a bespoke inter-agency intermediate data training was carried out in Dohuk in September 2016. This further boosted the practical capacity of inter-agency Information and Communications Technology (ICT) responders to deploy and maintain the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Internet solution. To ensure the continued safety and security of personnel, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster continues to offer radio operator training on request to humanitarians. The output target for the provision of training were not fully achieved due to the diversion of other agencies' staff to work on the Mosul response.

Progress Towards Gender Equality

Establishing the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Services for Communities was a step towards improving the lives of youth by providing access to the internet. Women and girls residing in Domiz camp are often limited in their access to such services and spaces in the camp. To address cultural sensitivities, the Emergency Telecommunication Cluster internet service at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Youth Centre allocated specific times for girls and women to have online access to the Emergency Telecommunication Cluster internet service. Focus group discussions with girls and boys revealed that while men and boys tend to use the services to find jobs, and improve their skills, girls benefit from this service by using the internet to improve their language skills

and academic education through online programmes and activities. Many of the girls reported that they listened to music online which provided them with a source of entertainment in their often-constrained camp life. As the Emergency Telecommunication Cluster expands its Services for Communities project in other camps, it will seek to include internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the roll out of such projects.

Through its role as facilitator, the Logistics Cluster has supported the receipt and delivery of gender-sensitive items, such as maternity kits, hygiene kits, dignity kits and baby kits, in order for humanitarian partners to adequately respond to the the different and varied needs of people affected by the Mosul operation.

Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations

A major area of success for the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster in 2016 was the launch of its first ever Services for Communities project in Domiz camp, Dohuk. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster seeks to ensure that by 2020, all those responding to humanitarian emergencies - including affected people - have access to vital communications services. The project in Dohuk provided Internet connectivity to Syrian refugees in the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Youth Centre and also established an Internet café in a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) container within the camp. This is in line with WFP Iraq's Accountability to Affected Population strategy, to enable communities to access effective and relevant information for their lives.

Access to the Internet allows the community to continue their education online, improve their language skills, access distribution schedules of assistance and, most importantly, enables them to keep in contact with their loved ones back in Syria. In the UNFPA Youth Centre and the Internet café in the UNHCR pre-fab in Domiz camp, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster printed out vouchers which gave users an allocated time to use the Internet. The team installed filters to block certain inappropriate sites. Locally-hired administrators are documenting each person who registers for a voucher, including name, age and gender. Data of Internet users is treated confidentially. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster provides Internet connectivity securely in line with WFP's corporate information and IT security policy.

Providing Internet to Syrian Refugees

With a population of just over 31,000 Syrian Kurds, Domiz camp in Dohuk, northern Iraq, is a sort-of city in itself. Driving through it, we pass bakeries – one is so good it actually provides bread to one of the hotels in Dohuk – butchers and bridal shops.

Turning left onto a smaller dirt road, the tents come into view, children are playing in the street. This is where the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Youth Centre is. It is where WFP-led Emergency Telecommunications Cluster is providing wireless internet connectivity to the affected community for the first time to improve the communities' access to information and to enable young Syrians gain access to the outside world, and focus on life outside the camp. This project, Emergency Telecommunications Cluster's Services for Communities, is part of the global Emergency Telecommunications Cluster strategy to ensure that, by 2020, affected communities and all those responding to humanitarian emergencies have access to communications.

Providing Internet access is one way WFP enables affected youth in the camp to get their lives back to normal. Once online, they are able to access the outside world, find opportunities to study and work, and are empowered by having access to relevant information relating to the various humanitarian services in the camps. For WFP, this project is an opportunity for the team to engage better with the communities it assists and to understand the needs and concerns.

Crucially, the internet is used for refugees to contact their families, many of whom are still in war-torn Syria. Wherever you are from and wherever you are in the world, the ability to pick up a phone and speak to your family is invaluable; it is a bridge back home.

Providing connectivity to affected communities in Iraq is a first for the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster began providing connectivity in an internet café it established in a UNHCR pre-fab in November. At an event to mark the milestone, one Syrian girl spoke of how the internet has positively impacted on her life in the camp.

"I use the internet to practice my English. I can do tests online and watch videos so that I can learn and become better. I look for jobs online on the NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI) website so I am able to focus on things outside of the camp, so I hope this project continues."

One of the team leaders in the youth centre summed it up:

"Back in Syria, we couldn't use or afford the internet so having it here in the camp helps us make connections on social media and keep in touch. I've created a news page for Domiz where I share the dates and locations of WFP distributions so people have this important information and people can talk and share their stories. I really hope this helps people."

Communication is a lifeline, something that is clear in Domiz camp. Access to communications strengthens the capacity of the affected people to help themselves respond and recover, instilling a sense of independence and self-reliance.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Cover Photo: OCHA/Sylvia Rognvik

Caption: To test the newly-established One Stop Shop, the Logistics Cluster facilitated a critically needed in-kind donation of relief commodities from the European Union's Civil Protection Mechanism in December 2016.

Project Indicators

Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
SO1: Special Operation (ICT)				
Number of Standard Operating Procedures developed and implemented	SOP	3	2	66.7%
Number of UN agency and NGO staff trained	individual	100	65	65.0%
Number of assessments/surveys conducted	assessment	4	5	125.0%
Number of common radio frequency licences made available	license	8	8	100.0%
Number of operational areas covered by common security telecommunication network	operational area	5	5	100.0%
Number of operational areas covered by data communications services	operational area	2	10	500.0%
Number of partners using data services	partner	37	37	100.0%
Number of radio-rooms (COMCEN) established	radio room	3	3	100.0%
SO1: Special Operation (Logistics)				
Number of Logistics Capacity Assessments developed or updated	assessment	1	1	100.0%
Number of UN agency and NGO staff trained	individual	30	26	86.7%
Number of agencies and organizations using coordination and logistics services	agency/organization	36	69	191.7%
Number of agencies and organizations using storage facilities	agency/organization	10	27	270.0%
Number of bulletins, maps and other logistics information produced and shared	item	20	65	325.0%
Number of cluster coordination meetings conducted	instance	15	35	233.3%
Number of hubs established	hub	1	7	700.0%
Number of mobile storage tents/units made available	unit	13	50	384.6%
Percentage of logistics service requests fulfilled	%	100	100	100.0%
Total storage space made available (m2)	unit	5,400	17,873	331.0%