



WFP The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200789

Country:	The Democratic Republic of the Congo
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in DRC
Total cost (US\$):	US\$ 27,991,716
Duration:	12 months (01 January 2015 – 31 December 2015)

Executive Summary

- This Special Operation (SO) 200789 has been established to continue the provision of aviation services for the humanitarian and donor community in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). It seeks to facilitate safe, reliable, effective and efficient air transport services to enable humanitarian stakeholders to carry out their projects in support of populations in need. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) has been running in the country since 2008 under SO 107440 (May 2008 - 31 December 2012) and SO 200504 (1 January 2013 – 31 December 2014).
- Air transport is the most viable means of travel in DRC. However, local and other non-commercial air operators fall short of international aviation standards. Some air transport support is offered by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department of the European Commission (ECHO) but these services are inadequate for the needs of the humanitarian and donor community. UNHAS is therefore the mainstay to address the transport needs of humanitarian actors in the country.
- The project will be managed through the WFP DRC Country Office with a fleet of five fixed wing aircraft and one helicopter to serve approximately 30 destinations. The project is planned for a period of 12 months, from 1 January to 31 December 2015, at a total cost of **US\$ 27,991,716**. The budget requirements will be raised through donor contributions (approx. 75 percent) and partial cost-recovery (approx. 25 percent).
- Various needs assessments were undertaken prior to establishing the operation and flight schedules are published in consultation with the UNHAS Steering Group Committee (SGC) and User Group Committees (UGC), which are represented by all categories of users: UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donors. The operation will be regularly monitored and reviewed in order to minimize risks and ensure that the service runs as effectively and efficiently as possible, and in accordance with standard procedures established by the UN and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Project Background

1. DRC has a territorial size as large as the whole of Western Europe. In the 2014 UNDP Human Development Report, the country ranked 186th out of 187 countries in the Humanitarian Development Index.¹ In many provinces, especially in the east, violence and armed conflict are rife, resulting in severe degradation in basic social services and protection of livelihoods. Consequently, humanitarian intervention is necessary to address the needs of populations in these areas. However, access remains a major challenge for humanitarian workers due to protracted conflict and poor infrastructure. Furthermore, security concerns associated with road travel do not only hamper the movement of humanitarian staff, but significantly increase response time of humanitarian organizations to interventions.²
2. The 2015 Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) in DRC³ defines the lack of humanitarian access in the country as a key obstacle to the implementation of humanitarian efforts. UNHAS services are central to facilitating humanitarian access to the most vulnerable populations.⁴
3. This Special Operation (SO) will provide transport solutions for the humanitarian and donor community in DRC. It delivers safe, reliable, effective and efficient air transport services to enable prompt implementation, supervision and monitoring of humanitarian activities.
4. UNHAS DRC has been implemented through SO 107440 and SO 200504. Since its inception in 2008, UNHAS remains the only air service that is open to all humanitarian, and donor community operating in the country. As of October 2014, UNHAS serves users from more than 238 organizations.
5. In 2014, the UNHAS DRC regular fleet was composed of four fixed wing aircraft: a jet, a medium-range turbo-prop and two LET 410s for short-field operations. In August 2014, a Mi-8 helicopter, which had hitherto been operated by WFP as a dedicated service for ECHO, was fully integrated in the UNHAS fleet. The helicopter is used to provide access to remote locations without airstrips, therefore enabling the humanitarian community to perform field assessments across a wider area, and facilitating evacuations for service users in eastern DRC.
6. Overall, 36 destinations were served on the regular schedule and five additional destinations were covered through special flights in 2014. From January to October 2014, the service transported 35,206 passengers⁵ and 388.25 metric tons (mt) of light humanitarian cargo. During the same period, UNHAS provided 14 special flights and 37

¹ The United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report 2014

² Preview Humanitarian Needs, DRC 2015, November 2014, OCHA, draft 1

³ <http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/programme-cycle/space/document/rdc-aper%C3%A7u-des-besoins-humanitaires-2015>

⁴ UNHAS' 2015 budget and plans are detailed in Logical Framework Activity X 1.1.1 "Air Transport of Humanitarian Staff and Cargo" of the HAP: <http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/democratic-republic-congo/document/plan-de-r%C3%A9ponse-humanitaire-hrp-2015-cadre-logique>

⁵ The passenger figure reflects the total number of passengers transported, including transits. Not taking the transits into account, the total number of passengers between January and October amounts to 20,843.

medical/security evacuations. A detailed summary of activities is indicated in Table 1 below:

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF UNHAS DRC ACTIVITIES											
2014											
MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	TOTAL
PAX	2,776	3,577	2,761	2,996	3,596	3,713	3,535	3,591	4,469	4,192	35,206
CARGO	15.86	15.76	11.48	20.76	42.02	48.94	47.81	39.48	86.39	59.54	388.25

7. Throughout 2014, UNHAS demonstrated its capacity in responding rapidly to changing humanitarian situations. In September, UNHAS established regular scheduled flights to Boende to support agencies responding to the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak in Equateur Province in coordination with its partner ASF-F. At the same time, UNHAS took the lead in coordinating with MONUSCO and ASF-F to provide a unified humanitarian response to move emergency cargo to Boende.
8. In view of the change of its mandate, MONUSCO has discontinued services in the western part of the country. Consequently, UNHAS DRC has needed to expand operations to fill this gap, and has also taken on more responsibilities to ensure that operational standards are maintained by working closely with Civil Aviation Authorities (CAA).
9. UNHAS has developed a strategy to meet the resultant rising costs of the operation, such as an increase of the nominal booking fee from US\$100 to US\$300 on long routes. Funds generated by nominal booking fees (partial cost recovery) are expected to cover 25 percent of the total budget requirements.

Project Justification

10. This SO is required to continue the provision of air services in order to facilitate humanitarian, staff travel to various locations in DRC. In particular, UNHAS is deemed necessary due to the following factors:

- a. Increased Demand

The demand for UNHAS services has increased steadily since services began in 2008. The number of monthly transported passengers increased from 2,776 in January 2014 to 4,192 in October 2014. Cargo movements increased from 15.86 mt in January to 59.54 mt in October. Consequently, both passenger and cargo movements have exceeded 2014 targets.⁶ In 2013, the average number of passenger movements during the same period was 3,153 per month, with cargo movements at 20.06 mt per month.

Various needs assessments, including consultations with NGOs, have indicated a continuously high demand for air services in DRC to support the implementation and monitoring of projects. NGOs are actively supporting UNHAS through advocacy and regularly providing feedback on the quality of the service and the provision of access.

⁶ The 2014 target for passengers transported was exceeded by 10 percent, while the amount of cargo was almost twice as high as the target.

b. Continuous Need for Humanitarian Assistance

As of October 2014, 6.3 million people in DRC are in need of humanitarian assistance. The country is hosting more than 120,000 refugees while some 2.6 million people are internally displaced. Over 2 million children under the age of 5 are suffering from acute malnutrition and 6 million are affected by stunting.⁷

NGOs and UN agencies have been responding to the multi-faceted needs of the population by providing required assistance. However, vast distances, poor road networks and insecurity hampers access to beneficiaries and implementation sites and impedes the delivery of life-saving aid. Thus, a safe and reliable air service is required to overcome the logistical bottlenecks facing humanitarian actors in DRC.

c. Lack of Alternate Means of Transport

Operational risk levels of national air carriers and other non-commercial air operators do not meet international aviation standards.⁸ All locally-registered air carriers are banned for use by UN staff, except Korongo Airlines which is accepted by some agencies on exceptional bases. Whilst efforts are underway to improve aviation safety in the country, this process is infantile and likely to take some time. In addition, several locations operated by UNHAS are outside the economic interest of commercial operators.

MONUSCO's aviation services and 'ECHO Flight' offer humanitarian staff limited air services. These services give priority to specific target groups and the supplementary capacity is insufficient to meet the travel needs of humanitarian organizations at large. ECHO Flight's internal criteria give priority to staff of organizations with projects sponsored by ECHO. Thus, UNHAS is the only air service open to all humanitarian actors.

Project Objectives

11. The objectives of SO 200789 are to:

- Provide safe, effective and efficient access to beneficiaries and project sites for NGOs, UN agencies, donor organizations and diplomatic missions;
- Transport light cargo such as medical supplies, high energy foods, and information and communication technology equipment;
- Provide timely medical and security evacuations for the humanitarian community in DRC; and
- Respond in a fast, efficient and flexible manner to ad hoc air transport needs of the humanitarian community.

The objectives above are linked to WFP's Strategic Results Framework and contribute towards Strategic Objective 1: Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies.

⁷ Global Emergency Overview, ACAPS, 12-18 November, 2014. (<http://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-emergency-overview-snapshot-12-18-november>)

⁸ All local aviation companies in DRC are on the European Union Blacklist (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air-ban/doc/list_en.pdf).

Project Implementation

12. On behalf of all users, WFP will manage UNHAS operations in DRC. The air service is expected to support at least 250 user organizations by providing regular access to more than 30 locations.
13. The interests of the users are represented through User Group Committees (UGC) which meet regularly at each aircraft base. The UGC handles administrative matters, provides feedback on service quality and identifies destinations to be served. A Steering Group Committee (SGC) has been established in Kinshasa to define operational requirements and air transport priorities, detail eligibility of organizations and determine service management based on upcoming needs.
14. In addition to stakeholder consultations such as UGC and SGC meetings, surveys will be launched on customer satisfaction and access provision with an aim to receiving feedback from a wider audience and tailoring the use of air assets to real demands.
15. In 2015, the operational fleet will comprise of five fixed wing aircraft (one EMB145, one Beechcraft 1900, two DHC-8, one C208B) and one Mi-8 helicopter. These assets will be positioned strategically in Kinshasa, Goma, Kalemie and other locations as may be required and tasked appropriately to effectively respond to humanitarian needs.
16. In order to enhance operational safety, WFP Aviation ensures appropriate training for UNHAS staff and staff of WFP partners involved in air operations in the country, including host government institutions. This and other capacity building initiatives will be pursued under this SO. In 2015, UNHAS is planning to host an aviation safety training event, involving the aviation authorities (RVA and CAA), the local air operators, MONUSCO and other humanitarian air operators. WFP Aviation also regularly evaluates the operational and technical proficiencies of the contracted air operators, which will help improve the quality of local carriers. The development of DRC's aviation carriers and supporting the development of the aviation industry and infrastructure is a key component of the UNHAS exit strategy.
17. The project will implement standard WFP management structures and support systems including the following:
 - Passenger and cargo bookings will be made through appropriate management structures to ensure the dissemination of flight schedules and manifests to all locations.
 - A dedicated communication system to monitor the progress of all flights through VHF/HF radios and satellite tracking systems.
 - The web-based electronic Flight Management Application (E-FMA) that enables on-line booking requests and monitoring of load factors, operational trends and costs.
 - Structured flight schedules (weekly and monthly) to ensure flexibility and accommodate special flights.

18. Based on the change in the operational context UNHAS will maintain a centralized planning office in Goma under this project. There will also be a dedicated UNHAS flight following office. Hitherto, this service had been assured by MONUSCO.

Project Management

19. The overall management, administration and control of the operation are vested in the Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO), who reports administratively to the WFP DRC Country Director (CD) and technically to the WFP Chief Aviation Service. The CATO will provide operational reports to the CD, the Chief Aviation Service and SGC/UGC. Air Transport Officers manage the day-to-day activities in the operational bases in Kinshasa, Goma and Kalemie.

20. The WFP DRC Country Director will act as the Fund Manager and the UNHAS Finance Officer will be the Allotment Administrator.

21. The project will be supported by the WFP Aviation Safety Unit (ASU) through the Regional Aviation Safety Office in Johannesburg (OMJ). Safety officers will perform field visits to evaluate the operational risk levels of operators and aircraft inspections to ensure the operation is conducted within acceptable limits of risk. A risk mitigation, safety management and occurrence reporting system to promote safety is in place. This includes to thoroughly follow the provisions of the project's Aviation Safety Program (ASP) and Aviation Emergency Response Plan (A-ERP).

22. The Aviation Service (OSLA) in Rome will be responsible for contracting of aircraft, quality assurance and normative guidance to the operation. OSLA will also provide operational and administrative support.

23. Under SO 200789, UNHAS will continue its active engagement in building partnerships. Current Technical Service Agreements (TSA) with MONUSCO and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will be maintained. However, MONUSCO's support in providing flight following, ground handling, and fuel to UNHAS will be reduced to those parts of the country where MONUSCO is still present. With UNHCR, UNHAS manages a dedicated air service to respond to specific operational needs of the former using 75 percent of the DHC8 contracted hours.

Project Cost and Benefits

24. The total project cost for this SO is **US\$ 27,991,716** as detailed in the budget below:

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN

SO Category	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in DRC	
Project Number	200789	
Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A):		
A – WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff directly involved in Operations)		\$2 068 687
B - Implementation Inputs (Operational Agreements, Communication, Vehicle leasing and maintenance)		\$22 397 745
Total Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A):		\$24 466 432
Direct Support Costs (DSC):		
A - WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff involved in Management and Administration)		\$850 196
B – Recurring expenses and Other WFP Costs		\$496 553
C – Capital Equipment Costs		\$41 000
D – Local Security Costs		\$32 480
E – Travel and Transportation Costs		\$273 822
G – Assessment, Evaluation, Monitoring, etc.		-
Total Direct Support Costs (DSC)		\$1 694 051
Total WFP Direct Project Costs:		\$26 160 483
Indirect Support Costs (ISC - 7 percent) :		\$1 831 234
TOTAL WFP COSTS		\$27 991 716

25. The project’s resources are expected to be raised through donor contributions and nominal booking fees (partial cost-recovery) on regular routes. It is estimated that donor contributions will make up 75 percent of the budget requirements while 25 percent will be generated through nominal booking fees. Full cost-recovery will be applied to special and unscheduled flights. Key donors have indicated a continued interest in supporting UNHAS DRC.⁹

26. The benefits envisaged under the UNHAS operation in DRC are as follows:

- Provision of predictable access to priority destinations to enable staff of humanitarian and donor organizations implement and monitor their projects;
- Enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and safety in the implementation and monitoring of humanitarian operations;
- A client-oriented common service that responds to user needs;
- Improved visibility for other WFP operations and enhanced corporate efficiency;
- Active partnership building between WFP and its interlocutors; and
- An essential medical and security evacuation service to the humanitarian community in the country.

Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

27. Key Performance Indicators will be measured and reported at the end of the project and will include the following:

- Number of Needs Assessments carried out (target: 4);

- Number of passengers transported monthly against planned¹⁰,
 - Passenger segments (target: 3,400)
 - Passengers transported (target: 2,100)
- Percentage of passenger bookings served (target: 95 percent);¹¹
- Tonnage of light cargo transported monthly against planned (target: 30 mt);
- Number of agencies using the service (target: 250);
- Number of destinations served (target: 30 destinations);
- Response to medical and security evacuations duly requested (target: 100 percent).

The project will be monitored regularly and reviewed, as necessary, to suit the prevailing operational context in the country and tailored to serve the needs of the humanitarian community accordingly.

Risk Management and Contingency Planning

28. A number of risks could impact the implementation of this SO. The main risks identified are presented through three risk areas.

29. **Contextual Risks:** Contextual risks relate to a potential expansion of the on-going conflict, resulting in a deteriorating security situation and access restrictions to certain locations. In such an event, UNHAS will leverage its close coordination with WFP Security, MONUSCO and UNDSS to ensure timely communication of the security situation at destinations and adapt operations accordingly. WFP Aviation has adequate contingency measures, with back-up aircraft based in Nairobi for the region, and the operation will call on these assets for support when required.

30. **Programmatic Risks:** Actors in the country may scale up their assistance through an increase in their staff while expanding the activities to more remote areas. UNHAS will be able to meet increased demands through efficient planning of flights using its current fleet. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and cargo transport, if required. Should needs be lesser than expected, DRC CO will undertake a progressive reduction of the fleet, whilst prioritising the continuation of key field support services.

31. **Institutional Risks:** The success of the SO is conditional on adequate resources being available to WFP throughout the implementation period. Resource mobilization strategies will include steps to be taken to address any funding shortfall. Jointly with the SGC, WFP will continue its advocacy efforts in order to ensure uninterrupted UNHAS operations for the humanitarian community.

Exit Strategy

WFP will rely on regular feedback and devise an exit strategy accordingly. However, given the complex situation in DRC, it is envisaged that humanitarian interventions will continue in

¹⁰ The difference between ‘passenger segments’ and ‘passengers transported’ arises from the fact that one and the same passenger might be routed through multiple segments to get to the final destination. Hence, ‘passenger segments’ reflects the total number of passengers transported, including transits.

¹¹ This does not include unserved bookings due to flight cancellations resulting from bad weather or insecurity.

2015 and UNHAS operations will continue to be required to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations.

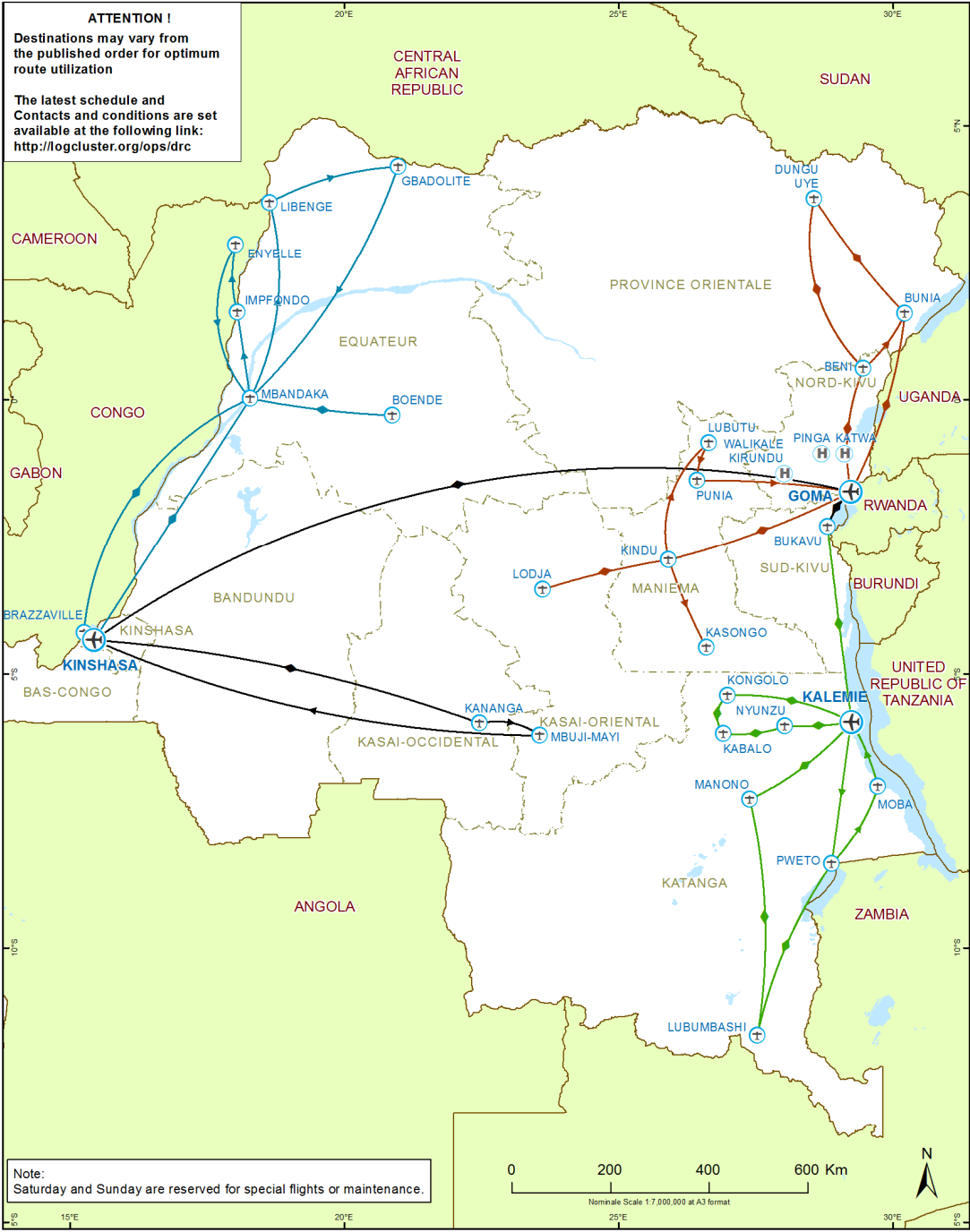
RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation 200789 covering the period from 01 January to 31 December 2015 at a total cost to WFP of **US\$ 27,991,716** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director

ANNEX I
UNHAS DRC 2015 Routes



 	<p>Democratic Republic of Congo</p> <p>UNHAS routes Draft for 2015</p>	UNHAS Based Aircraft	UNHAS Air Connection Kinshasa-Based Aircraft (UNO113H) Kinshasa-Based Aircraft (UNO203H) Kalemie-Based Aircraft (UNO205H) Goma-Based Aircraft (UNO201H)	Route One Way Both Ways	Date Created: 07 November, 2014 Coord System: Datum: WGS84 Map Number: C00_UNHAS_RoutePlanned2015_A3P Data sources: Logistics Cluster, UNHAS, RGC. maps@logcluster.org www.logcluster.org/ops/drc Logistics Cluster, Kinshasa - RDC
		Destination Upon request destination	Water Body Provincial Boundary International Boundary	Disclaimer: The boundaries and names and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsements or acceptance by the United Nations.	