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BUDGET REVISION OF SO FOR APPROVAL BY THE CHIEF OF STAFF

5) To:	Division	Room	Approval and Date
Mr. Jim Harvey Chief of Staff	OED	6G36	
4) Through:	Division	Room	Signature and Date
Ms. Elisabeth Rasmusson Assistant Executive Director	PG	6G72	
3) Through:	Division	Room	Signature and Date
Mr. Manoj Juneja Assistant Executive Director	RM	6G00	
2) Through:	Division	Room	Signature and Date
Mr. Ramiro Lopes da Silva Assistant Executive Director	OS	6G62	
1) From:	Regional Bureau	Signature and Date	
Mr. Abdou Dieng Regional Director	RBD		

**Niger Special Operation 200792
BR No. 02**

PROJECT	Previous Budget	Revision	New Budget
CD&A (US\$)	13,773,595	6,639,008	20,412,603
DSC (US\$)	1,499,375	687,318	2,186,693
ISC (US\$)	1,069,108	512,843	1,581,951
Total WFP cost (US\$)	16,342,078	7,839,168	24,181,246

TYPE OF REVISION

- Additional DSC
 Additional CD&A
 Extension in time
 Change in project orientation
 Other

NATURE OF REVISION:

Budget Revision Two (BR 02) to Special Operation 200792 'Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Niger' seeks to extend the project in time for 12 months to ensure continued provision of air transport services to the humanitarian community until 31 December 2017, with a subsequent budget increase of **US\$ 7,839,168**.

The components budgeted under CD&A represent operational agreement costs, namely air contract costs, fuel (89 percent of total CD&A) and staffing, as well as travel and other costs (11 percent of the CD&A).



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BACKGROUND:

1. Niger remains the world's poorest nation ranking 188th out of 188 in the United Nations Human Development Index¹. According to the World Bank, it has a poverty rate of 48.9 percent and a per capita income of US\$420. Its estimated population of 19.8 million is predominantly rural, agrarian and concentrated in the south. Poor infrastructure, lack of safe water and sanitation, poor education systems, restricted production capacity, limited access to markets, pronounced gender disparity and the urban/rural divide hinder development. Niger is also prone to harsh climatic conditions such as drought, floods and locust infections that impact negatively on availability and access to food. As of August 2016, 1.9 million infants suffer from acute malnutrition, while 2 million people are food insecure².
2. With average or above average rainfall and good planting season in 2016, The Food Security Outlook for Niger from June 2016 to January 2017 shows that acute food insecurity will be minimal (IPC Phase 1). However, in the Diffa region, which is badly affected by the ongoing crisis in the Lake Chad Basin, food insecurity is expected to reach crisis level (IPC Phase 3)³. Three out of four families in Diffa, the poorest region of the world's poorest country, are at risk of going hungry⁴.
3. In September 2016, the Ministry of Public Health announced the outbreak of Rift Valley Fever, an acute mosquito-borne disease that normally affects domestic animals and is often transmittable to humans. As of the end of September, it has caused 23 human deaths, with more than 60 people affected, mostly pastoralists in Tchintabaraden health district in Tahoua region⁵. Ongoing risk assessments by the World Health Organisation and government counterparts, project that 124,337 people are at risk and this may increase with the potential to spread to neighbouring countries through nomadic pastoralism. Significant livestock deaths have been reported from the virus particularly cattle, sheep and camels, resulting in the loss of livelihoods and access.
4. Insecurity in neighbouring countries, namely the north-east of Nigeria and Mali as well as in Southern Libya, continues to drive widespread population displacement. Refugees, returnees and internally displaced populations are constrained to co-habit due to depleted resources, increasing food insecurity and loss of livelihoods. Incidents of kidnapping and violent attacks by the Islamic State West Africa (ISWA) in Diffa are on the rise. The region is host to an estimated 302,387 displaced people; a combination of Nigerian refugees, returnees and IDPs. In the Tahoua region, two sites for the Malian refugees were attacked on 10 September and 6 October 2016⁶. The number of Malian refugees in Niger continues to increase as insecurity in northern Mali has caused continuous displacements towards Niger, in the regions of Tillabery and Tahoua. Over 60,000 Malian refugees are living in the south-west part of Niger, mostly in camps and hosting sites with constant new arrivals requiring urgent humanitarian assistance.
5. Niger airlines and Fly SkyJet have regular scheduled flights throughout the country. However, none of these commercial airlines meet the international aviation standards nor the United Nations Aviation Standards (UNAVSTAD). There is need for a viable air service to enable

¹ United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 2015. New York, 2015

² OCHA: Niger Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2016.

³ Fewsnet: [Niger Food Security Outlook \(June 2016-January 2017\)](#)

⁴ OCHA: Lake Chad Basin-Crossroads of Humanitarian Challenges 2016

⁵ WHO: [Rift Valley Virus outbreak in Niger, September 2016](#)

⁶ Humanitarian Bulletin Niger (September-October 2016).



more than 110 user organisations who are dependent on UNHAS to reach the affected population.

6. The interests of the humanitarian community are represented through the User Group Committee (UGC). The UGC provides guidance on administrative matters including decisions on destinations and flight schedules, while the Steering Committee (SC) advises on strategic matters and engages in advocacy efforts in support of UNHAS. As part of its efforts to ensure responsiveness to user organizations' demands, UNHAS organized two User Group Committee (UGC) meetings at strategic intervals in March and August. SO 200792 BR 2 is a continuation of the air services provided since 2008.

IMPLEMENTATION TO DATE:

7. From January to October 2016, UNHAS Niger transported 9,028 passengers (from origin to destination – without transit) and 27.6 mt of cargo to five regular destinations including; Agadez, Dirkou, Diffa, Tahoua and Zinder with two fixed-wing aircraft. In addition, the service has performed seven medical evacuations. A detailed summary of activities is indicated in Table 1 below;

MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	TOTAL
HOURS	145.85	166.82	205.95	211.27	206.8	226.6	211.95	210.01	193.08	214.14	1,992.47
PAX	557	693	916	977	1,009	959	994	961	912	1,050	9,028.00
CARGO	4.381	2.342	2.881	2.319	1.981	3.865	2.217	3.397	2.057	2.138	27.578
EVACUATIONS	-	-	1	-	2	1	2	1	-	-	7

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REVISION:

8. This budget revision to continue the provision of air services in order to facilitate humanitarian staff travel to various locations in Niger is deemed necessary due to the following factors:

- a. Continuous Need for Humanitarian Assistance:

The scale of the humanitarian crisis in Niger continues to increase as a result of widespread insecurity in the Lake Chad Basin. The Diffa region, the most affected by the conflict, is host to 302,387 people comprising; 88,660 refugees, 184,404 internally displaced and 29,315 returnees⁷. According to UNOCHA, every second person in the Diffa region is affected by the conflict and two out of three have been displaced more than once⁸. Most of the displaced people are residing with families in the host communities, where, due to the insecurity, resources are lean and sources of livelihood depleted⁹.

⁷ UNOCHA: Bulletin Humanitaire (September-October 2016). Data from the Directorate of State for Migration and Refugees (DREC).

⁸ UNOCHA: Bulletin Humanitaire (September-October 2016)

⁹ CERF-Rapid Response Concept notes, OCHA Niger July 2016.



More specifically, about 130,000 people (100,000 displaced and 30,000 from host families) are in dire need of assistance for shelter and NFIs, potable water and sanitation,; medical care with particular attention to pregnant women, inputs for vegetable gardening and fodder to enhance resilience, and protection monitoring to respond to and prevent human rights and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) violations and to ensure psychosocial support and child protection.

b. Continued Demand:

Since the state of emergency was declared in Diffa region in 2015, UNHAS has enhanced its flexibility to support off-schedule flight requests in-line with the operational imperatives of the aid organisations on the ground. As of February 2016, UNHAS increased its number of flights and cargo from 3 to 5/6 rotations per week. In June, for instance, 12 additional flights took place above the 13 already scheduled, bringing the total number of flights to 25. In July, 5 additional flights took place besides the 13 already scheduled, bringing the total number of flights to 18. User organisations have continued to scale up their interventions in Diffa region. UNICEF and humanitarian stakeholders are using the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) to access beneficiaries at locations where static operations cannot be established due to insecurity. UNHAS is a critical part of this response to ensure uninterrupted access to the affected population.

c. Lack of Viable Alternatives:

Vast distances and undeveloped road infrastructure in Niger make overland travel to beneficiary populations impracticable. However, there are no safe and reliable air service providers in the country. Furthermore, insecurity remains a grave concern in the country and the entire sub-region due to the crises in Libya, Mali and Nigeria. Several attacks have been recorded both in the local communities and on the humanitarian community. From 1 January to 22 September 2016, UNOCHA reported 42 attacks and clashes, five mine explosions and four suicide attacks linked to Boko Haram in Diffa Region¹⁰.

Road travel is extremely dangerous, especially in the northern part of the country and, when cleared, vehicle convoys are mandatory for humanitarian travels between Niamey and the two regional capitals of Tahoua and Agadez. Therefore, the entire humanitarian community relies on UNHAS to access people in need.

9. In 2017, the operational fleet will comprise of two 19-seat certified fixed-wing aircraft. The aircraft are positioned in Niamey and tasked appropriately to effectively respond to humanitarian needs in the country. Given the complexity of the humanitarian situation and limited infrastructure, UNHAS will remain a key player in enabling more than 110 organizations to reach at least six destinations in Niger on a regular basis.
10. In line with WFP's Strategic Results Framework, the objectives of the Special Operation 200792 for 2017 will remain as follows:
 - To provide NGOs, UN agencies, donor organizations and diplomatic missions in Niger with safe, effective and efficient access to beneficiaries and project implementation sites;

¹⁰ OCHA: Niger/Differ-Attacks Related to Boko Haram in 2016 (as of 22 September 2016)



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- To transport light cargo, such as medical supplies, information and communication technology (ICT) equipment;
- To provide adequate capacity for evacuations of humanitarian staff.

11. The project's key performance indicators have been slightly revised and will include the following targets for 2017:

- Number of Needs Assessments carried out (target: 4);
- Number of passengers transported from origin to destination (target: 11,400);
- Percentage of passenger bookings served (target: 95%);¹¹
- Amount of light cargo transported (target: 42,000 kg);
- Number of organizations using the air service (target: 110);
- Number of locations served (target: 7);
- Response to medical and security evacuations duly requested (target: 100%).

12. The specifics of the implementation of this project will be constantly reviewed and tailored to changing realities on the ground according to the needs of the humanitarian community.

RECOMMENDATION:

In light of the above, this budget revision for an extension in time for twelve months until 31 December 2017 with a subsequent budget increase of **US\$ 7,839,168** is recommended for approval by the Chief of Staff, with the budget provided.

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



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Annex A
2016 Planned UNHAS Niger Routes

