



WFP Central African Republic SPECIAL OPERATION SO 201045

Country:	Central African Republic
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Central African Republic
Total cost (US\$):	US\$ 15,097,755
Duration:	1 January to 31 December 2017

Executive Summary

1. This Special Operation is established to provide air transport assistance to the humanitarian community in the Central African Republic (C.A.R.). According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, about 2.3 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, including the internally displaced population¹. Renewed violence in some parts of the country in September has led to a significant reduction of the humanitarian space. Many aid organisations have relocated staff out of the most affected locations leaving in its wake, multiplication of crisis hot spots and a drastic reduction of operational capacity of humanitarian actors². However, continuing insecurity and poor transportation networks severely limit access to vulnerable populations.
2. The recent violence has further exacerbated the fragile living conditions of the population. The departure of humanitarian actors in the Kaga Bandoro area of Nana Gribizi Prefecture, will have significant impact on an estimated 120,000 people who are food insecure and rely on assistance with additional 35,000 internally displaced persons who may not receive food aid from the World Food Programme as a result³. Resumption of humanitarian activities will depend on the stabilization of the security situation. Access to the affected population will be crucial to avert a large-scale humanitarian disaster. Without a critical service such as UNHAS aid workers will be unable to reach the affected destinations to deliver aid and to provide lifeline to the most vulnerable population.
3. Fleet composition and operational routes have been determined after consultations with the User Group Committee (UGC) and Steering Committee (SC). The project will be implemented through standard WFP management structures and support systems and regularly reviewed in accordance with standard procedures in order to minimize risks and ensure operational efficiency.
4. On behalf of the humanitarian community, UNHAS will serve approximately 28 regular destinations with four aircraft. The budget requirements will be raised

¹ Central African Republic: Humanitarian Bulletin #16 October 2016

² *ibid*

³ OCHA Central African Republic Press release Visit of the Humanitarian Coordinator to Kaga Bandoro September 2016

through donor contributions (approx. 80 percent) and partial cost-recovery (approx. 20 percent).

5. The SO will be implemented under the overall responsibility of WFP C.A.R within a period of 12 months, starting 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017. Total cost for the operation is US\$ 15,097,754 as detailed in the budget. 88 percent of the budget is for CD&A, 5 percent for DSC and 7 percent for ISC. The CD&A budget is spread across operational agreement programming which includes air contract costs and fuel (88 percent of the CD&A) and Staffing, travel and other costs (12 percent of the CD&A).

Project Background

6. In the Central African Republic, three years of conflict and subsequent displacements have pushed millions into poverty. Some 2 million people – nearly half of the population- face hunger. More than 800,000 are still displaced internally or in neighbouring countries. More than 2.35 million of the population of the country is in need of humanitarian assistance in at least one sector⁴. The extremely fragile security continue to force new displacements. Thus, thousands of people were forced to flee yet again after an attack on an IDPs Camp in Kaga-Bandoro that claimed the life of 38 civilian and wounded 51 people, on 12 October. The number of internally displaced people have increased 9 percent, from 384,884 IDPs to 420,681 IDPs between September and October.⁵ Acute humanitarian needs and highly fragile security situation calls for a continuation of emergency assistance to the affected populations to protect their livelihood, reduce consumption deficits, and prevent acute malnutrition.
7. In 2016, humanitarian operations scaled up in C.A.R, resulting in an increase in the number of humanitarian organisations registered with UNHAS from 111 in October 2015 to 138 as of July 2016.
8. As of 15 October, about 95 percent of the houses of local partners of humanitarian organisations were looted⁶. This and other sundry attacks led to the withdrawal of humanitarian actors and suspension of activities in Kaga Bandoro, L'Ouham-Pende, Ouaka and other emerging hot spots, resulting in a reduction in the number of organisations utilizing UNHAS. There is no precise information on the level of reduction in the number of aid organisations on ground, however, the security relocation of 53 aid workers by UNHAS in October underlines enormity of the exit. UNHAS has maintained the aircraft capacity as organisations plan a surge operation to meet new needs.
9. With limited infrastructure and a challenging security situation, road transport is impracticable, time consuming, dangerous and limits access to beneficiaries. UNHAS plays a crucial role in the overall humanitarian effort by providing access to fragile populations. Aid workers face dangers related to the current security challenges as well as suffer different ailments while providing life-saving support to the affected population. The service remains a vital mean for medical and

⁴ UNOCHA Data: Central African Republic Country Page October 2016

⁵ Central African Republic: Humanitarian Bulletin #16 October 2016

⁶ *ibid*

security evacuations. From January to October 2016, UNHAS has facilitated 33 medical evacuations and 57 security relocations.

10. UNHAS has been present in the country since 2006 and remains the only air service that provides equal access to staff of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies, donor organizations and diplomatic missions. 138 user organizations rely on UNHAS to implement and monitor humanitarian activities in C.A.R. For the period January-October 2016, the monthly average passenger transported increased to 1,800 from 1,400 recorded in 2015; corresponding to an increase of 28% of the number of passengers between 2015 and 2016. Also, UNHAS has transported a monthly average of 33.2 mt of cargo in 2016, against 30 mt planned. A detailed summary of activities is indicated in Table 1 below:

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF UNHAS C.A.R. ACTIVITIES 2016											
MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	TOTAL
Hours	350.29	359.32	369.52	415.95	428.53	343.09	387.84	362.57	382.04	381.91	3,781.06
Passengers	1613	1678	1665	1821	1836	1857	1716	1781	1833	1811	17,611
Cargo (MT)	26.2	28.4	41.3	43.6	51.2	33.2	37.6	19.6	21.4	29.7	332.1
MEDEVAC	04	02	05	0	05	04	03	06	03	01	33
SECEVAC	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	04	00	53	57
Special flights	08	07	10	05	03	08	08	06	08	15	78

Project Justification

11. In 2017, the provision of air services will be implemented through **SO 201045** to facilitate access to beneficiary sites. In particular, UNHAS C.A.R. is deemed necessary due to the following factors.

- a. Continuous Need for Humanitarian Assistance

The security situation remains volatile across C.A.R. Recent violence in Kaga Bandoro of Nana Gribizi, L'Ouham-Pende and Ouaka has reduced the humanitarian space considerably, with new displacements and abandoned humanitarian activities impacting negatively on the affected population. As of 31 October 2016, 420,681 people are displaced within the country and 467,000 Central Africans are seeking refuge in neighbouring countries such as Cameroon and Chad. More than 2.3 million people need urgent humanitarian assistance, including shelter, food, water, health care and education⁷. The ability of the humanitarian community to continue responding effectively to the challenging humanitarian situation in C.A.R. will depend on uninterrupted access to beneficiaries, hence the need for a reliable, effective and efficient air service.

⁷ [Central African Republic: Humanitarian Bulletin #16 October 2016](#)

b. Lack of Safe Humanitarian Access

The operational environment for humanitarian organizations remains complicated. Continued conflict hinders humanitarian access due to violence against civilian populations, and aid workers. From 9 to 16 September, more than 16 security incidents involving humanitarian actors were reported. A significant 95 percent of the houses belonging to local partners of humanitarian actors were looted resulting in the relocation of several aid workers. As of 15 October, 38 deaths have been recorded while 51 people have been wounded⁸.

Further, insecurity and weak infrastructure in C.A.R. render surface travel impracticable and risky, thereby limiting access to beneficiaries. Subsequently, air travel is essential for humanitarian organizations to access project sites. However, there are no commercial air service providers in the country that meet international standards. Therefore, UNHAS plays a vital role in ensuring rapid access to the main intervention areas. Besides complementary air services provided by MSF and ICRC, mainly for their own staff, UNHAS is the only safe and reliable means to access beneficiaries promptly.

c. Increased Demand

As a consequence of the on-going humanitarian crisis, humanitarian activities have scaled up in 2016. The number of organizations using UNHAS has increased from 111 to 138 registered user organizations. During its meeting in 2016, the UGC endorsed the continuation of UNHAS C.A.R. in 2017 and the same recommendation was expressed at the SC meeting in May 2016.

Project Objectives

12. The objectives of this SO are:

- To provide safe, effective and efficient access to beneficiaries and project implementation sites for NGOs, UN agencies, donor organizations and diplomatic missions;
- To transport light cargo such as medical supplies, high energy foods and information and communications technology equipment; and
- To provide timely medical and security evacuations for the humanitarian community in C.A.R.

The objectives above are linked to WFP's Strategic Results Framework and are examples of Strategic Objective 1: Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies. The objectives are also in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Project Implementation

13. In 2017, UNHAS seeks to continue providing a safe, reliable, effective and efficient air transport service to facilitate the humanitarian community's access to at least 31 regular destinations within C.A.R. with a fleet of four aircraft; one 35-seater Dash 8, one 9-seater Grand Caravan Cessna 8 and two 17-seater Let 410 aircraft. The Grand Caravan Cessna 8 and Let 410 aircraft have short take-off and

⁸ ibid

landing capabilities and can serve several destinations within C.A.R. UNHAS aircraft can be configured easily into an all-cargo role. The Grand Caravan, a single-engine aircraft is used for humanitarian air transport to locations where the airstrips are very short ranging from 700 to 800 m. In addition to providing air services, the SO caters for the augmentation of essential aviation infrastructure, including the maintenance of some of the field airstrips to optimize the use of the fleet and ensure uninterrupted access. Furthermore, UNHAS will continue to position fuel in drums in four strategic locations to ensure a sustainable fuel supply. It is estimated that 138 NGOs, UN agencies, and donor representatives will benefit from the service in 2017. The reduction in the number of user organisations is in line with the recent withdrawal of some humanitarian actors due to the conflict.

14. The interests of the humanitarian community are represented through the User Group Committee (UGC) composed of NGOs, UN agencies and donor organizations. The Terms of Reference for the UGC are limited to administrative matters and include decisions on destinations to be served and matters relating to the quality of the service. A Steering Committee (SC) was established in Bangui in 2014 to define operational requirements and air transport priorities, detail eligibility of organizations and determine service management based on upcoming needs.
15. Stakeholder meetings, including UGC and SC meetings, will be organized on a regular basis. Additionally, surveys will be launched on customer satisfaction and access provision with the aim to receiving feedback from a wider audience and tailoring the use of air assets to real demands.
16. The project will implement standard WFP management structures and support systems including:
 - 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, monitoring of the usage of the air service by various agencies and monitoring of load factors, operational trends and costs.
 - Monitor its performances in terms of effectiveness and efficiencies with a value-for-money approach, using the Performance Management Tool (PMT), regularly reviewing its fleet and staffing level, ensuring adequate response to demand and strive for efficiency.
 - Structured flight schedules (weekly and monthly) to ensure flexibility and accommodate special flights.

Project Management

17. The WFP C.A.R. Country Director will act as the Funds Manager and the UNHAS Finance Officer will be the Allotment Administrator of this operation.

18. The overall management, administration, and control of the operation are vested in the Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO), who reports administratively to the Country Director and technically to the Director of Supply Chain Division through the Chief Aviation Service in Headquarters, Rome. The CATO will be responsible for all operational matters including scheduling, operators' compliance, safety management, and risk management.
19. 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.

Project Cost & Benefits

20. The SO will be implemented under the overall responsibility of WFP C.A.R within a period of 12 months, starting 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017. Total cost for the operation is US\$ 15,097,754 as detailed in the budget. 88 percent of the budget is for CD&A, 5 percent for DSC and 7 percent for ISC. The CD&A budget is spread across operational agreement programming which includes air contract costs and fuel (88 percent of the CD&A) and Staffing, travel and other costs (12 percent of the CD&A). Below are the budget details;

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN		
SO Category	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in C.A.R.	
Project Number	201045	
Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A):		
A – WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff directly involved in Operations)		\$ 1,041,241
B - Implementation Inputs (Operational Agreements, Communication, Vehicle leasing and maintenance)		\$ 12,358,387
Total Capacity Development and Augmentation (CD&A):		\$ 13,399,628
Direct Support Costs (DSC):		
A - WFP Staff Related Costs (Staff involved in Management and Administration)		\$ 507,223
B – Recurring expenses and Other WFP Costs		\$ 98,000
C – Capital Equipment Costs		\$ 34,500
D – Local Security Costs		\$ 27,000
E – Travel and Transportation Costs		\$ 43,700
Total WFP Direct Support Costs:		\$ 710,423
Total WFP Direct Project Costs:		\$ 14,110,051
Indirect Support Costs (ISC - 7 percent) :		\$ 987,704
TOTAL WFP COSTS		\$ 15,097,754

21. A partial cost recovery mechanism is in place and is expected to generate approximately 20 percent of the budget requirements through nominal booking fees while donor contributions are expected to make up 80 percent of the

requirements. Full cost-recovery will be applied to special and unscheduled flights.

22. The benefits envisaged under the UNHAS operation in C.A.R. are as follows:

- Provision of predictable air transport services to priority destinations in order to enable humanitarian staff and donor organizations to carry out their duties in C.A.R.;
- Operational efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation and monitoring of humanitarian projects;
- A common service consistent with the call by the UN Secretary-General for greater unity of purpose and coherence at the country level so that UN entities can benefit from one another's presence through corresponding consultative and collaborative arrangements;
- A cost-effective service that can take advantage of economies of scale through continuous monitoring and a results-based management concept; and
- A client-oriented common service that responds to users' needs.

Monitoring & Evaluation

23. 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: at least 4);
- Number of passengers transported annually against planned;⁹
 - Passengers per segments (target: 30,000);
 - Passengers transported (target: 19,200);
- Percentage of passenger bookings served (target: 95%);¹⁰
- Tonnage of light cargo transported monthly against planned (target: 420 mt);
- Response to medical and security evacuations duly requested (target: 100%);
- Number of agencies using the service (target: 138);
- Locations served (target: 31).

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

Risk Assessment & Contingency Planning:

24. A number of risks could impact the implementation of this SO. The main risks identified are presented through three risk areas (contextual, programmatic and institutional). The subsequent narrative explains risks and outlines mitigation measures to be taken.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ This does not include unserved bookings due to flight cancellations resulting from bad weather or insecurity.

- a. **Contextual Risks.** The security situation in C.A.R. remains challenging. UNHAS will work in close coordination with UNDSS to ensure timely communication of the security situation at destinations and plan its operations accordingly. Operational hazard identification will be constantly implemented through the established WFP Aviation structure and the relevant risk analysis and mitigation actions will be implemented as required to keep an acceptable level of risk.
- b. **Programmatic Risks.** Humanitarian agencies may scale up their assistance in the country through an increase in their staff and geographical scope. UNHAS will be able to meet the increased demand through efficient planning of flight operations using its current fleet. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and cargo transport, if required.
- c. **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. WFP will continue its advocacy efforts in order to ensure uninterrupted UNHAS operations for the humanitarian community.

Exit Strategy

25. WFP will rely on regular feedback and devise an exit strategy accordingly. However, in the view of the current humanitarian situation, complex security situation and the lack of reliable commercial alternatives, it is envisaged that humanitarian interventions will continue in C.A.R. in 2017 and UNHAS would be needed to facilitate the work of humanitarian organizations.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017 at a total cost of **US\$ 15,097,754** is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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 Ertharin Cousin
 Executive Director

ANNEX A

UNHAS C.A.R. Routes as of August

