



**WFP Central African Republic (CAR)  
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200522**

Country:	Central African Republic (CAR)
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in CAR
Total cost (US\$):	<b>US\$7,638,002</b>
Duration:	Twelve months (01 <sup>st</sup> January 2013 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2013)

### Executive Summary

The Special Operation (SO) 200522 has been prepared to ensure continued provision of safe and reliable air transport services to the humanitarian community in the Central African Republic (CAR) for 2013. Previously (from October 2006 until December 2012) humanitarian air operations in CAR were implemented through SO No. 105620.

Due to insecurity in the Central African Republic (CAR) resulting from acts of continuous armed conflict in the north-west, north and north-east; and the Lord's Resistance Army activities in the south-east of the country, humanitarian workers are unable to travel safely by road. In addition, during the rainy season most roads become impassable, impeding access to beneficiaries. In the absence of safe and reliable air service providers in CAR, WFP/UNHAS remains critical for implementation of humanitarian projects. Over 40 humanitarian organizations rely on humanitarian air services to access internally displaced people (IDPs), refugees, host populations and other vulnerable people throughout the entire country.

In 2013 WFP/UNHAS is planning to maintain two 15-seat Let 410 aircraft. This type has short takeoff and landing (STOL) capabilities suitable for operations in the area. WFP/UNHAS will continue operating to at least 20 locations across the country.

The Special Operation is required for the duration of twelve months, from 1st January to 31st December 2013, at a total cost of US\$7,638,002. WFP/UNHAS is planning to generate 15 percent revenue through subsidized ticket sales, with the remaining 85 percent coming from donor contributions.

### Project Background

1. Central African Republic (CAR) is a very poor country of 4.5 million people which has recently emerged from over a decade of armed conflict. The country was ranked 179 out of 187 in the 2011 UNDP Human Development Index with approximately 62% of the population living in poverty, and over three-fifths subsisting on less than US\$ 1.25 per day. Furthermore, only 67% of the population

have access to sources of drinking water, while only 34% to adequate sanitation facility<sup>1</sup>.

2. CAR was recently classified as one of the top 10 most dangerous countries in the world by the Global Peace Index. Due to insecurity resulting from acts of armed conflict in the north of the country and from the Lord's Resistance Army activities in the south-east of the country, humanitarian workers are unable to travel safely by road. Furthermore, during the rainy season (May to November), many roads are closed as they are not maintained and become impassable. Therefore, access to beneficiaries is impeded. Consequently, air travel is critical for the provision of an effective and timely humanitarian response to internally displaced people (IDPs), refugees, host populations and other vulnerable people throughout the entire country.
3. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (WFP/UNHAS) has been present in CAR since October 2006 and provides safe, efficient and cost effective humanitarian air services.
4. Since mid-2010 aircraft utilization has been increasing. The high demand for WFP/UNHAS in the country is linked directly to the insecurity. At present the occupancy rate for WFP/UNHAS flights is almost 100% on North-Eastern and Eastern destinations, and around 85% on Western destinations.
5. In order to address the increased humanitarian demand, in 2011 WFP/UNHAS expanded its fleet from one to two aircraft and increased the number of operating hours, while reinforcing its staffing structure.
6. Apart from its regular activities, in response to the humanitarian crisis in Vakaga region during the summer of 2012 (11,000 vulnerable people were cut off from regular supplies of food and medicine during the rainy season), WFP/UNHAS deployed one MI8-T helicopter to Ndele. On a daily basis between 10th August and 24th, the helicopter was used for transportation of vegetable oil, medicines and air drop specialist to 4 locations in the province. This enabling preparatory work for the reception of food and organization of its immediate distribution to the population on site upon being air dropped.
7. From January to November 2012 the service transported 6286 passengers and over 30mt of light humanitarian cargo, in addition to evacuated 11 people (10 medical and 1 for security reasons).

### **Project Justification**

8. In mid-2012, CAR had 75,198 internally displaced persons (IDPs), 39,855 recent returnees and 19,867 refugees, as well as 150,000 of its population in Cameroon and Chad.

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<sup>1</sup> OCHA analysis, 2012 report

9. Humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable population in CAR will continue in 2013. The challenge of access to vulnerable populations is a never ending due to conflict, banditry, and poor infrastructure. There are rebel groups and armed factions operating in various areas of CAR, and while some of them have committed themselves to the peace process, others, most notably the Lord's Resistance Army, continue to perpetrate attacks and conflict in the eastern regions.
10. Banditry is a chronic problem throughout CAR, especially along main routes, where civilians and aid workers are often the targets of armed ambushes, theft and sometimes kidnapping.
11. The lack of safe commercial air service operators in country, combined with the lack of adequate medical facilities and the extremely poor infrastructure in CAR and the sub-region necessitates the continuation of WFP/UNHAS operations in 2013.
12. There are currently over 40 United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) present in the country who rely on the WFP/UNHAS. Their air travel requirements are discussed during monthly User Group Committee (UGC) meetings, and are reflected in the prepared flight schedules.
13. The continuation of WFP/UNHAS service has been endorsed by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) as well as by the User Group Committee (UGC).

## **Project Objectives**

14. The objectives of the SO are:
  - To ensure that humanitarian organizations (UN agencies, NGOs) and donor representatives have access to beneficiaries and project implementation sites through the provision of efficient air services;
  - To carry out medical and security evacuations for humanitarian workers; and
  - To respond in a fast, efficient and flexible manner to the needs of the humanitarian community.

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.

## **Project Implementation**

15. WFP will manage the WFP/UNHAS CAR operation on behalf of the humanitarian community who will benefit from WFP's expertise and experience in managing air operations.
16. In accordance with the WFP Air Transport Directive of January 2004 and in compliance with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) recommendations, WFP will continue to be guided by the UNHAS User Group Committee (UGC) composed of United Nations agencies, NGOs and donor representatives in Bangui, where most country offices of the various organizations are based. The role of the UGC is to define the requirements and priorities in

terms of air transport needs, as well as to monitor the quality of services rendered and provide feedback and guidance to the WFP Chief Air Transport Officer (CATO). UGC meetings are conducted on a regular basis.

17. WFP/UNHAS will operate two 15-seat capacity Let 410s (technically the capacity of the aircraft is 19 seats, but limited to 15 due to operational constraints). The aircrafts have short takeoff and landing (STOL) capabilities and serve over 20 locations within the country. Passenger seats can be easily removed to allow transportation of light cargo.
18. WFP/UNHAS will continue positioning drummed fuel in a few locations to increase passenger load and reach remote locations.
19. The NGOs operating in remote locations will facilitate minor works for rehabilitation of the airstrips to allow safe WFP/UNHAS operations.
20. The aircraft operational base will remain in Bangui. WFP/UNHAS will continue operating scheduled flights from Bangui to Bambari, Bangassou, Batangafo, Berberati, Birao, Bocaranga, Boguila, Bossangoa, Bouar, Bozoum, Bria, Carnot, Gordil, Kabo, Kaga Bandoro, Markounda, Mboki, Ndele, Obo, Ouadda Djalle, Paoua, Rafai, Sam-Ouandja, Tiringoulou and Zemio.
21. The project will follow standard WFP/UNHAS management structures and support systems :
  - Passenger and cargo bookings will be made through WFP/UNHAS management structure.
  - In the interest of flight safety, a dedicated communication system will be maintained to monitor the location and flight progress of the WFP operated aircraft through VHF/HF radios and satellite tracking systems.
  - The Web Based Electronic Flight Management Application (EFMA) system is fully functional and will continue to be implemented. The system enables monitoring of the usage of the air service by various agencies, trends of cargo usage, flight routing and provide operational and cost data for management overview.
  - Weekly/ monthly flight schedules are maintained, with flexibility to adjust to requests for special flights.
22. The Aviation section (ODLA) based in Rome is responsible for the contracting of the aircraft and safety oversight of the operation.
23. Quality Assurance assessments will be conducted by ODLA and their reports will be used as a tool for evaluation and improvement of operational efficiency.
24. In order to enhance safety of air operations, as well as to participate in aviation capacity building initiatives, WFP Aviation will continue conducting aviation training for WFP and non-WFP (partners and government) staff involved in the air operations in the country.

25. The CATO will manage the operations locally under the overall supervision of the WFP CAR Country Director, with technical supervision and oversight by the Chief ODLA. The CATO will provide operational reports for activities in the respective country to the CD, the Chief ODLA, and UGC.
26. The WFP CAR Country Director will act as the Funds Manager and the WFP/UNHAS Finance Officer will be the Allotment Administrator for this operation. ODLA will provide operational and administrative support and will be responsible for the oversight of the operational activities under this project.

## Project Cost & Benefits

27. The total project cost for this Special Operation is **US\$7,638,002** as detailed in the budget.

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN		
SO Category	Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in CAR	Value (USD)
Project Number	200522	
Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC):		
A - Recurring Costs(Incl. Rental of facilities, Utilities, Office supplies & other consumables, Communications & IT Services, equipment repairs & maintenance, vehicles running costs):		60,500
B - Operational Service(s) Costs (aircraft fixed and variable costs):		6,246,880
• Air charter agreements – US\$3,536,200		
• Fuel and its mobilization to remote areas – US\$2,015,000		
• Crew costs – US\$360,000		
• Airstrips rehabilitation works – US\$100,000		
• Handling, air safety, navigation and other – US\$235,680		
C - TC/IT Equipment Costs (data processing equipment):		10,000
D - Vehicle Leasing Costs		8,400
Total Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC):		6,325,780
Direct Support Costs (DSC - Staff Salaries and other costs):		
A - International Professional Staff + consultants		704,540
B - Local Staff (General Service + Temporary Assistance)		57,000
C - Other Staff Costs (incl.travel and allowances)		51,000
Total Direct Support Costs (DSC):		812,540
Total WFP Direct Costs:		7,138,320
Indirect Support Costs (ISC - 7 percent) :		499,682
TOTAL WFP COSTS		7,638,002

28. WFP/UNHAS is planning to continue generating 15 percent revenue through subsidized ticket sales, with the remaining 85 percent coming from donor contributions. The air capacity will be shared with UNHCR providing them a minimum of 25 flight hours for dedicated flights monthly on a cost recovery basis.
29. The envisaged benefits of the UNHAS operations in CAR are as follows:
- Enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and security in the implementation and monitoring of humanitarian operations;

- A common service provided to the humanitarian community which is consistent with the call by the Secretary-General “for greater unity of purpose and coherence at country level and that each United Nations entity should benefit from another’s presence through establishing corresponding consultative and collaborative arrangements”;
- Enhanced air safety through a standardized, single contracting and safety surveillance system;
- A cost-effective service that can take advantage of economies of scale through lower aircraft direct operating cost and payload consolidation.
- An essential tool used to provide medical and security evacuation service to the humanitarian aid community in the country.

## Monitoring & Evaluation

30. Based on project historical statistics, key performance indicators<sup>2</sup> will be reported on yearly in the SPR for this project and will include the following:

- Aircraft occupancy rate (target: 70 percent);
- Average number of passengers transported per month (target: 500 passengers per month);
- Average tonnage of food or non-food items transported against requested or planned quantities (target: 3mt of non-food items per month);
- Utilization of contracted hours (target: 100 percent);
- Frequency of the Users Groups’ meetings (target: monthly);
- Number of agencies and organizations using the air service (target: 40)
- Number of locations served (target: 20)
- Percentage of requests medical and security evacuations addressed (target: 100 percent)

The implementation plan will be revised, as the situation evolves, according to the needs of the humanitarian community.

## Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning

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

32. **Contextual Risks.** Security in CAR can deteriorate, which may result in limitation of humanitarian travel. WFP/UNHAS will work in close coordination with UNDSS and with NGOs operating in remote locations to ensure timely communication of security situation at flight destinations and will plan its operations accordingly. Identification of operational hazards will be done through

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<sup>2</sup> All Key Performance Indicators above are linked to WFP’s Strategic Results Framework and are examples of Strategic Objective 1.

established WFP Aviation procedures, the relevant risk analyzed and mitigation actions taken in order to keep an acceptable risk level.

33. **Programmatic Risks.** Humanitarian agencies may scale up their assistance in the country through an increase of staff and expansion of activities to more remote areas. WFP/UNHAS will be able to meet the increase in humanitarian travel through efficient planning of flight operations using its current fleet. Additional aircraft capacity can be rapidly deployed for passenger and cargo transport, if required.
34. **Institutional Risks.** The success of the SO is conditional on adequate resources being available to WFP throughout the implementation period. The fundraising strategy will include steps to be taken to address shortfalls. WFP/UNHAS and its UGC's will continue advocacy efforts in order to ensure uninterrupted services for the humanitarian community.

#### Exit Strategy

35. WFP Aviation will monitor the trends in the aviation system in CAR. For the moment it is highly improbable that credible operators would emerge and be able to serve air travel needs of humanitarians. However, should this happen, WFP/UNHAS will assist in capacity building of potential service providers. If no longer required WFP/UNHAS fleet will be reduced or the entire WFP/UNHAS operation will be suspended.

#### RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 01st January, 2013 to 31st December 2013 at a total cost to WFP of US\$7,638,002 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

#### APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin  
Executive Director