



Flying Report

Prepared for the ISTAT Foundation

For many of us here in the west we have received our Covid-19 vaccinations and may have even had our second or third booster. However, for those living in the isolated and often poverty stricken communities that MAF seek to serve, access to health care often lies beyond their reach.

However, thanks to the partnership of the International Society of Transport Aircraft Trading our aircraft have played a vital role in ensuring that no one gets left behind in the global fight against the pandemic.

The following are examples of the type of operations that your support has enabled.

Flying Vaccines in Liberia.

In 2021 MAF flew over 8,000 doses of the Covid-19 vaccine to Harper in the south-east corner of Liberia. Partners in Health (PIH), who have served in the country since 2014, rely on MAF services to receive vital medication, vaccines and support for the hospital there.



The flight carried over 6,000 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and 2,000 doses of AstraZeneca and were for people living and working in Maryland County, including healthcare workers and priority patients. This was the first time MAF had flown Covid-19 vaccines in Liberia.



'Although [Covid-19] vaccines would have eventually arrived in Maryland, the delays in shipment due to poor road conditions would have caused longer waits,' says Viola Karanja, the Deputy Executive Director for PIH in Maryland County.

"Since the AstraZeneca vaccine has a short expiration date, this would have likely resulted in shorter vaccination campaigns or increased wastage, hampering coverage across the county and impeding our efforts to combat COVID-19."

Fighting the pandemic holistically

The main focus of PIH is reaching out to the most vulnerable people, ensuring equity, social justice and quality of health care is given through universal health coverage. To achieve this, PIH work together with the ministry of health (MOH) in system strengthening and capacity building.

Partners in Health have endeavoured to fight the pandemic holistically, completing home visits, providing psychosocial support, promoting Covid-19 prevention through community engagement and awareness, and conducting case management for Covid-19 patients at treatment units or in home-based care. *"To ensure adherence to Covid-19 quarantine and isolation measures,"* says Viola, *"we provide social support – food and hygiene packages – to Covid patients, contacts and affected families."* Describing how the pandemic has affected her staff, Viola says they are often overstretched and work extra hours or shifts to address the additional demands arising from Covid-19.

Critical partnership

Poor road infrastructure means that communities in Maryland County, where Harper is situated, have inadequate access to medical care and healthcare workers. Recruiting and retaining health care workers is difficult and the isolation means that there is a high poverty rate and poor nutrition within communities due to a lack of food

Thus, the partnership PIH has with MAF is vital. Viola says *"During the dry season, sending medication from Monrovia to Harper can take four days, rising to over one week during the rainy season. While transportation by ship can reduce this time to three days, this journey only takes a maximum of two hours with MAF. This partnership with MAF is critical for transporting medical commodities requiring refrigeration such as vaccines, insulin and certain laboratory reagents, ensuring that clinicians are equipped to provide high-quality care."*



Flying for Life in Madagascar

55 years after its independence, Madagascar is among the least developed African countries, with 91% of the population living on less than \$2 a day and 77.1% of the population living in what is considered extreme poverty. Madagascar is also highly vulnerable to natural disasters including cyclones, droughts and flooding and is the third most vulnerable country in the world to climate change.



Those seeking to deliver help to these impoverished communities face incredible challenges. Madagascar has one of the least developed road networks in the world. Road density is only 5.4km per 100km² (compared to 175km per 100km² in the UK). As only 11% of the population live within 2km of an all season road this leaves over 17 million Malagasy completely isolated from outside assistance.

This is why MAF have been flying for life in Madagascar since 1989. For many living in isolation across the country our aircraft are often represent the only hope of outside assistance.

Delivering Vaccines

Last summer, MAF Madagascar Country Director shared the exciting news that Pilots Ryan Unger and Wouter Nagel had delivered the very first vaccines to Marolambo. A small box was loaded onto the plane, to make the very first vaccine delivery in the country

Two days later the plane was chartered for a second vaccine flight, this time to four different destinations. 'The partner was UNICEF again,' explains Pilot Ian Purdey. 'There were no passengers to accompany the shipment as travel at the time was restricted between regions due to the Covid outbreak, so we just carried the 320kg of freight. There was a total of 6500 doses delivered (spread across the 4 destinations) of the Covishield and Astra-Zeneca vaccines - enough for 3250 people

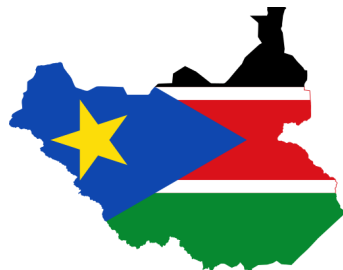
The journey to deliver the vaccines would have taken anything from one to two weeks by a suitable 4X4 vehicle compared to just 40 minutes by an MAF flight. In addition MAF, drawing on their considerable experience of flying cold chain vaccines were able to keep the precious cargo at



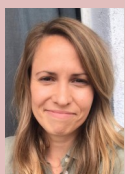
Unloading Covid-19 Vaccines for the final leg prior to distribution

Covid Emergency Response in South Sudan

Jasmine is a paediatric emergency nurse working on Medair's Emergency Response Team in South Sudan. At the height of the pandemic Jasmine was assigned to an intervention in Nimule, a small town located close to the Ugandan border. Medair were responding to the needs of healthcare authorities and local partners on the ground to strengthen their support around Covid 19.



South Sudan remains one of the most dangerous countries in the world to be an aid worker. After a two-year decline in fatal attacks against aid workers, killings increased sharply in 2020 and continue at a level not seen since 2016-2017 at a highpoint of fighting in the civil war.



'It can be difficult to get to Nimule. There are roads, but they're insecure, so travelling by road is not an option for us. We need to fly. It's great that MAF actually were able to get our team to Nimule in order to do this response.'

MAF Flew both for our assessment team and also for our intervention team, as well as carrying cargo that we needed for one of our interventions in Nimule giving people kits to enable them for home isolation if they're Covid positive.'



Breakdown of expenditure

In November 2021 The ISTAT Foundation generously supported Covid related flights across MAF's programmes with a gift of USD 9,900 . Below is a breakdown of how this gift was utilised.

Programme: Arnhem Land

Flight hours: 2 hours of flying (9 Pax) (GA8 Airvan) @ USD 795 per hour = USD 1,590

Freight: 445KG of Covid related freight @ USD10.50 per Kg per hour = USD 4,674

Subtotal: USD 6,264

Programme: Chad

Flight hours: 8.2 hours of flying (3 Pax) (Cessna 182) @ USD 463 per hour = USD 3,797

Subtotal: USD 3,797

Combined Total: USD 10,061

Overcoming Covid Challenges in Chad

2021 began in some turmoil in Chad, as the government responded to changes in the Covid situation both domestically and globally. In early January restrictions across the country were tightened with very short notice; ground and air travel were halted, and the capital city put in 'confinement' for an undefined period.



This left some of our partners stranded and without transport options. 'One missionary had gone to a town in the east for Christmas and couldn't get back,' explains Ops Manager and Pilot Becki Dillingham. 'Another family had planned to come down by road but obviously with the closure of everything, they couldn't, and they had no idea how long this might last.'

For that family, Ethan and Sierra and their young son, the situation wasn't just an inconvenience, but something with significant implications.

Sierra explains further. *'Living out in a remote village has many challenges and aspects that require trust in our Almighty God. However, with trust comes wisdom and preparedness. My family lives in a village that is a long, rugged two-day drive from the capital city. One of my biggest concerns as a wife and mother is what will happen if a medical emergency requires immediate evacuation. We are so grateful that in the last two years of living remotely, we have not needed such services. Regardless, it brings much comfort in knowing there is the option to call MAF and have them come to get us in an emergency.'*

Recently, we faced a need to utilize MAF services in a way that we never dreamed of. We are pregnant with our second child and had been planning on driving to the capital to give birth there.

However, two days before our planned departure, the government ordered the land border of the capital to be closed to incoming and outgoing traffic starting four hours after the order was released. They also said that the airport was being shut down with four days' notice. There was no telling how long these orders would be in place and how strictly they would be enforced. Considering we lived so remotely with no medical care, we were very concerned about getting our family to the capital where there would be trustworthy care to help deliver our baby.

We began conversations with the MAF and they shared their concerns about the government not allowing them to fly domestically once the airport was shut down. By this time, we had one day left to fly. It was a weekend and they typically don't fly on Sundays, but the pilot and staff were fully onboard to work long and hard to help us.'

As the deadline for closure loomed ever nearer, MAF was not the only operator scrambling to complete flights. 'The airport on that Sunday was absolutely manic,' reports Becki. 'Everybody was there, the skies were heaving.'

'The day they flew out to pick us up, I was so grateful to have a safe and effective way to get our family to the capital,' Sierra continues. 'I was also giddy with excitement because I grew up hearing about MAF through my church and missionaries my parents supported, and now here I was getting to be the one blessed and served by this incredible organization! I will never forget the gratitude and relief I felt as we landed on the airstrip in the capital.'

'Thank you MAF for your dedication to serve'



Becki Dillingham Ops Manager & MAF Pilot

We are incredibly grateful for the support of the **ISTAT Foundation**. Thank you for your partnership with MAF as we seek to ensure that no one gets left behind in the fight against Covid-19, no matter how remote they are.

For more information about MAF's work to reach isolated communities with the essentials of life. Please contact:

Simon Dunsmore - Partnership Manager, MAF-UK

Tel: 01303 852818 **Email:** Simon.Dunsmore@MAF-UK.org