

The Human Side of United Nations Humanitarian Air Services



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Flight Services & Aviation Academy



UNHAS
Humanitarian Air Service

CAPTAIN SOLOMON GIZAW
ABYSSINIAN FLIGHT SERVICES

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Captain Solomon Gizaw
Abyssinian Flight Services



Dallol, Ethiopia







Located NE part of Ethiopia, Eritrea
-One of the lowest places on earth



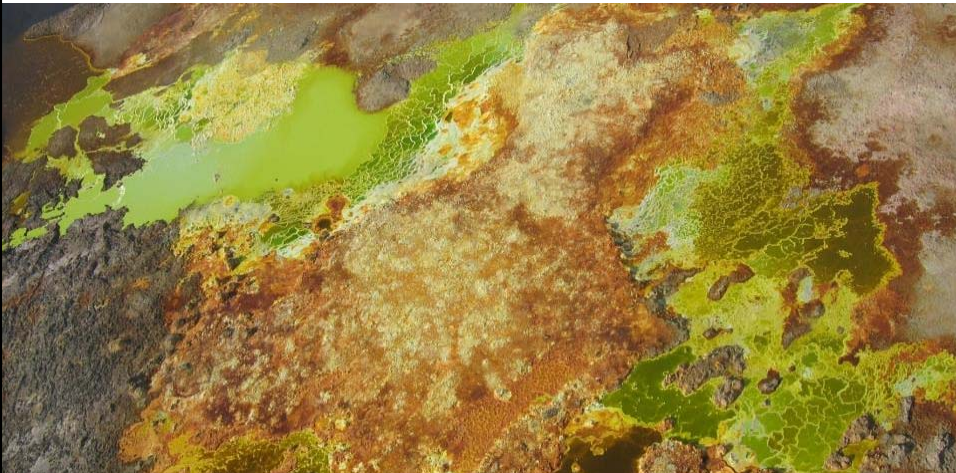
-Temperatures exceeding 50°
-Dry, isolated, remote barren land



Visited by die-hard tourists & adventurers



Different Faces of Dallol, Ethiopia







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- Emergency call for **Search & Rescue**
 - Missing young woman, foreign national
 - Separated from a group of friends
 - Challenging weather
 - Dispatched AFS helicopter



Operational Challenges

- Too many interested parties calling
- Harsh weather conditions
- Lack of security of the area
- Minimal direct communication with first responders



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Human Factor

- Pilots dealt with the shock of finding their rescue target deceased.
- Pilots having to wrap the body with a piece of cloth because of limited resources.
- Transportation of the body back to Addis Ababa



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What does this have to do with UNHAS?



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A common Denominator

No matter our upbringing, no matter which part of the world we come from, no matter our education backgrounds, one common factor that I believe we all in this room have and share is **our desire to serve those requiring our assistance** in whatever capacity we may be able and **to stretch a helping hand** for the less fortunate.

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A common Denominator ...con'td

The example I raised in my opening remark is not at all unique to Abyssinian Flight Services because our required services with UNHAS are similar to my example in which we put ourselves at risk everyday for the benefit of others.

From my eerie landing at Kigali after the genocide to flying into refugee camps in Uganda and Ethiopia, I consider myself privileged for doing something bigger than just for personal gain.



Peace of Mind

UNHAS provides to the end user not just a convenient air transport but the peace of mind that UNHAS will be somehow manage to respond to any emergencies if requested regardless of the distance and remoteness of where an aid worker might be working.

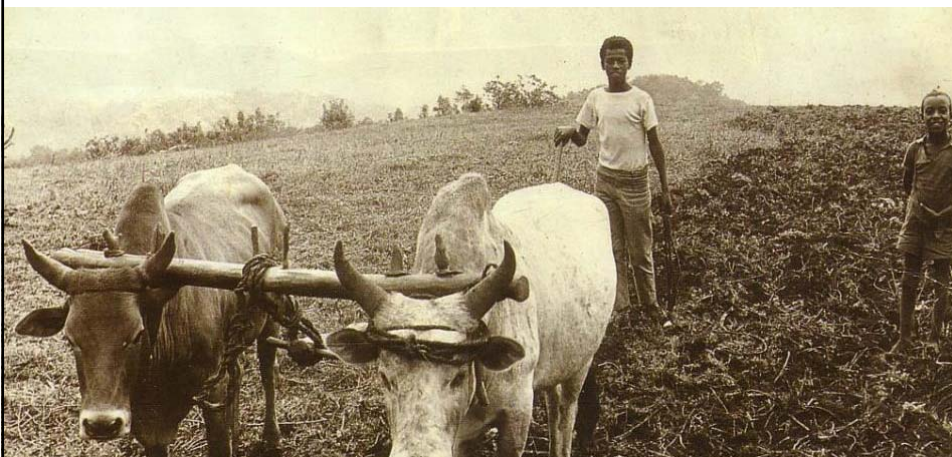


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My Journey



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Mission Aviation Fellowship

- The early years
 - Falling in love with Mission Aviation
 - As laborer fixing airstrips
 - Job offer as airline pilot
 - Training, domestic & International Flights





Early Missions

- As MAF Pilot/Mechanic in Haiti, Uganda, Ethiopia
- I was privileged to be one of the first pilots to fly into Kigali, Rwanda after the atrocities of 1994
- One of my first high profile missions as Abyssinian Flight Services was in response to the draught of late 90s in the Eastern part of Ethiopia.



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-Abyssinian Flight Services

- Established in 1999
- With one lease purchased Cessna Caravan
- About six staff

-Currently we Own and Operate

- 7 Cessna Caravans
- 10 Training Aircraft
- 1 Helicopter
- The only private pilot training school in Ethiopia.



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-Thanks to the ever evolving safety & operational standards by the WFP, we are now positioned as one of the reliable UNHAS air service providers flying in both Ethiopia and South Sudan.

-We are also benefiting from the spirit of partnership between ASU and operators rather than the typical client & vendor relationships of the past. This non-blame approach by ASU is immensely contribution to the overall safety culture as it is encouraging operators to be transparent and seek assistance if and when required.



Self Reflection

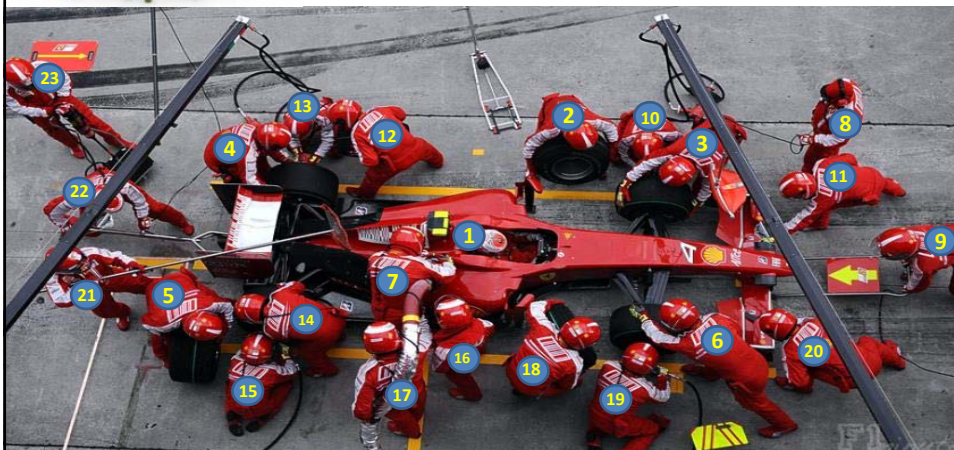
- Too often, our efforts are overshadowed by never ending tasks that demand our time and other priorities.
- Taking a step back and assessing our people and upraising our operations is important as to stay focused on the bigger picture; which is, our unique disposition in providing a crucial link in United Nations Humanitarian Air Services.
- We are not doing a job that just provides us salaries but doing something that we love doing because it enables us to make a difference in other people's lives.



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Team Work Crucial for our Survival



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Team Work



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- A united sense of purpose and professionalism
 - Willingness to take responsibility & playing by the rules
 - Safety attitude
 - Ability to set aside personal prejudices
- Considering the hundreds of people who depend on the employment provided by UNHAS and striving to deliver our job with the very best intentions, quality & integrity.
- Always remember that UNHAS's service success relies on the operators reliability, honesty & service attitude.
- I for one I am privileged to be part of this incredible group of people and organization for which I am grateful.



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