



Brazil Helicopter Program

Vital for Gospel Outreach in the Western Amazon

In the western Amazon region of Brazil, unreached people groups still wait for the gospel. But reaching them is nearly impossible. Grueling land and river travel thwarts the efforts of church planting teams, making it nearly impossible for them to stay the ten to twenty years to present the gospel and establish a thriving church.

With airstrips impossible to build, a helicopter is the transportation of choice for this “deepest, darkest, hardest to reach place in that whole big jungle.”

The goal of this project is to purchase a Robinson R66 helicopter and set up a helicopter program to meet the needs of the Missão Novas Tribos do Brasil missionary teams.

Your gift toward the purchase of the helicopter will enable Ethnos360 Aviation to serve all our current missionaries in the region and open the door to reach ten additional people groups living in extreme isolation. The helicopter would furnish a refreshingly viable network to sustain ministry teams by providing transportation to their ministry locations.

For more information, contact
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Formerly known as
New Tribes Mission
Aviation

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A Problem — Losing Aviation Service for Outreach

Aviation program manager Joel Rich was dismayed by what he and his co-worker heard as they visited with church planters from the western Amazon area of Brazil. “We were **shocked and saddened by the state of discouragement** that they were in. They seemed headed for burnout,” he recalls.

These **trained missionaries**, who entered the jungle with high hopes of bringing the greatest message in the world to people groups who needed to hear, were now **on the verge of throwing in the towel**.

“Our hearts have been breaking as we realize that these are our co-workers that we are here to support,” he lamented.

What happened? What failed?

Up until twelve years ago, another mission provided flight service in this region. But the cost was high, and they could no longer continue. As a stop-gap measure, a plane from a mission in another region flew in at intervals, but it couldn’t meet all the needs.

Still, dedicated missionaries tried to press on with minimal aviation in the nearly impenetrable jungle. Biting insects, poisonous snakes, and nights spent sleeping in the jungle plagued their hikes. **It’s an “adventure” to endure such hardship for a recreational back-packing trip. But it’s an “ordeal” when you have children in backpacks while also trying to carry your sustenance for the next few months.**

Without helicopters, sustaining missionaries in this region is, frankly, impossible.

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Unsustainable Outreach

Some missionaries manage to brave the travel. But once on location, they face crushing isolation, sickness, lack of adequate supplies, and inconsistent or nonexistent communication by radio. **They live in survival mode, with little time and energy left to accomplish the monumental task of bringing the Gospel message.** Co-workers could ease their burden. But how can they attract new people to join them in an admittedly unsustainable ministry location? How can they convince new families to bring a wife and kids into a virtually unsupportable living situation? New personnel, gifted in mind and spirit, simply can't sign on for the job because they can't face the physical rigors.

Language and culture acquisition presents another set of obstacles. Missionaries use the time left over after grueling travel and time-consuming survival to grapple with learning an unwritten language. They hope to teach the gospel and translate the scriptures — if they can ever progress that far. Unfortunately, they can be easily stymied by language puzzles, such as key terms with no corresponding word in the indigenous language. How do you explain the Gospel without a word for *grace* or *forgiveness*? Though the missionaries promise a message from the almighty Creator God, the villagers are left wondering if God is even powerful enough to speak their language.

To sort through language and culture issues, **the church planting teams — if they ever hope to actually plant a church — desperately need outside help from gifted and skilled language consultants** to work through complex linguistic puzzles. But skilled consultants are often older missionaries who can't face the harshness of treacherous land and river travel.



An aircraft could ease many trips for consultants, says field leader Phil Poulson. “What is sadder still,” he adds, “are the **many trips that our field leadership and consultant teams simply *can not make* because they are completely unfeasible without aviation.**” Meanwhile, missionaries stagnate in their progress, lose motivation, and face burn out. “When that happens,” adds Poulson, “**it is the indigenous [group] that suffers the most.**” People who expect to hear God’s message wait and wait and may eventually lose interest in wanting to know God.

Without consistent, viable transportation, sustaining church planters for the twenty-plus years required to build a thriving church is, frankly, impossible.

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Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.
Proverbs 13:12

Why Helicopters Are the Solution

About ten years ago, seeing the crying need for aviation, Ethnos360 Aviation moved toward reinstating service in the western Amazon area. They designated a Cessna 206 for Brazil and sent both a pilot and mechanic to pave the way. It took years for the plane and personnel to meet all the requirements. Finally in October of 2015, the plane made its first ministry flight in the region. **Having the Cessna 206 on location was a breath of fresh air**, relieving missionaries of huge travel burdens and providing them with things they had simply done without.

But only three locations had usable airstrips. And building new ones turned out to be virtually impossible.

Permission to cut protected trees, access to land available for purchase, funds to pay registration fees – and the countless years and man hours to build the strips — all made new airstrips impractical and unfeasible.

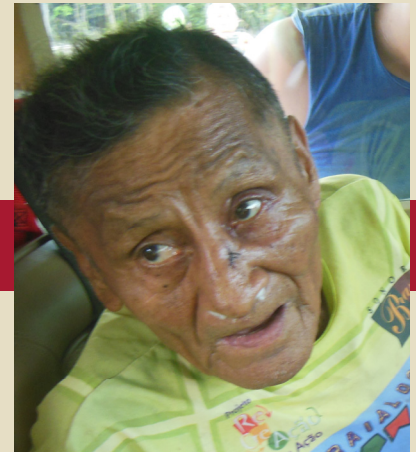
With an airplane just close enough to tease them, **missionaries in villages without airstrips continued to face the same crushing difficulties as before.**

As program manager Joel Rich talked with these struggling church planting teams, his heart broke. “I could see the exhaustion and isolation on their faces as they talked,” he remembers. These were the people he had come to serve. But they were not being – and would not be – served by aviation at all. It was a vain hope.

When Joel mentioned the idea of a helicopter, though, their whole outlook changed. Could it be? Days of boating, hiking, and riding buses to get needed supplies – reduced to a thirty-minute flight right from their village to a substantial city? Leaders and consultants regularly visiting to help with sticky language and cultural issues? Supplies delivered often enough to live above survival mode? Real progress in their work? It sounded too good to be true. **But hope was born!**

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Why a Robinson R66 Helicopter Is Our Solution

A Robinson R66 will make outreach in this part of Brazil feasible.

- The R66 has the range of operation needed to reach all the people groups in this region of Brazil.
- The R66 can land just about anywhere. All that is needed is a soccer field – and almost every village has one.
- Since the helicopter doesn't need runways, it eliminates years of construction, paperwork, purchase costs, permissions, registrations, and high-maintenance upkeep.
- The legalities for helicopter flight and landing are far fewer than for airplanes, allowing greater freedom to work.
- Helicopter service opens the way to attract trained and skilled missionaries to consider working in difficult places. Whole teams could be built and sustained for the ten to twenty years needed to present the gospel and plant thriving churches among unreached people groups.
- Teams would have regular supply runs, allowing them to live above survival level and freeing them to devote time to their ministry. Missionaries would have means to take vital breaks, reducing the attrition rate from emotional and physical burnout.
- Consultants would be able to make essential visits regularly to guide language, culture, literacy, translation, teaching, and discipleship. The work among people groups would move forward rather than languish and stagnate.
- Mission leaders could make important visits to give encouragement and keep teams on track. Accountability would increase and missionaries could set goals — and reach them.
- Most importantly, people groups would hear the gospel, have God's Word in their language, and become thriving groups of believers.

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Renewed Vision for Outreach

Just knowing that Ethnos360 Aviation is trusting God for an R66 helicopter for the region has brought renewed hope to the mission team in western Brazil. **The mission leaders have already targeted ten more people groups for outreach, trusting God to supply the flight service needed for such an ambitious goal.**

Currently, a helicopter pilot is working on his advanced helicopter training, and a mechanic is already on location. Funds are in hand for initial flight sponsorship.

Present and future outreach now hinges on positioning a helicopter in the region.

“... the region ... specifically, is the deepest, darkest, hardest to reach place in that whole big jungle. ... [T]here are still uncontacted tribes with their own unique languages, culture, and history ... who have never heard the Gospel. Many of these groups haven't even made peaceful contact with the other tribes in the region.”

—pilot Jeremiah Diedrich

What's Needed to Institute Helicopter Service

Making helicopter a reality for our Brazilian missionaries involves three phases of action.

Phase One: We need to acquire a new or slightly used Robinson R66 helicopter to initiate service. Buying one already located in Brazil would possibly avoid long delays of import paperwork.

Phase Two: We need to buy land to build a hangar from which to operate the helicopter program. Having our own base of operations ensures that the pilots, mechanics, buyers, loadmasters, and missionaries have easy access to the helicopter without needing specialized airport clearance.

Phase Three: We need to provide helicopter training for at least two pilots in order to provide uninterrupted flight service to the missionaries. One pilot is currently in Portuguese study in Brazil. The other is in Brazil and needs to come to the USA to learn English and get advanced training.



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Robinson R66 Helicopter Total Cost * \$1,353,304

Robinson R66 Brazil Dealership Cost:	1,334,254
Factory Equipment Options	included
Brazil Tax and admin fees (15%)	included
Engine Fuel Flow System	included
Sling Load System,	15,000
Survival Equipment	4,050

*Based on new purchase in Brazil. We hope to find a well maintained, slightly used R66 helicopter in Brazil, hopefully lowering cost and taxes.

Hangar and Program Setup \$228,791

Land purchase	77,000
Hangar/Shop Construction	108,000
Jet-A Tank and Fueling System	15,000
Ground Handling Cart and Wheels	6,874
Robinson Specialty Tools	15,343
Battery Maintenance System	1,574
Spare Parts Inventory and Reserve	5,000

Helicopter Training and Licensing for two Pilots \$195,800

Flight Training and Licensing for Two Pilots	180,000
Robinson maintenance school	3,300
Rolls Royce turbine maintenance training	7,500
Travel and lodging	5,000

Administrative fees \$21,230

Total Helicopter Program Setup \$1,799,125

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You can play a significant part ...

1. You can become an advocate by praying and telling others about this need. Ethnos360 Aviation can provide you with the proposal materials so you can present the Brazil Helicopter Program opportunity to your mission-minded friends. Please contact us at 1-520-642-9280 or by email at: ethnos360aviation@ntm.org.
2. You can give a gift by sending a check to Ethnos360 Aviation, 3870 W Volunteer St, McNeal AZ 85617, designated for Brazil Helicopter Program. You can also give by credit card by calling 866-547-2460 or online at: <https://ethnos360.org/projects/helicopter-program-for-brazil>
3. If you would like to become a major player in helping us position an R66 helicopter in Brazil, please call Jim Sims at 520-266-9022 or email Jim Sims at jim_sims@ntm.org.
4. If you would like to give towards a specific part of this project, such as the R66, hangar or training, just add a note with the gift to let us know what you are most interested in.

Thank you for being part of the team, planting churches among unreached people groups.

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