

**Evaluation and Assessment for UNDP Rwanda of the Project 00040553
“Supporting Aid Harmonisation, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda”**



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by

Social Impact, Inc

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this document are those of the independent evaluation team and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Development Programme, the Government of Rwanda or other stakeholders involved in the project.

Where factual evidence is presented, efforts have been made to cross-check and verify information against sources and with stakeholders on the ground to ensure consistency and accuracy throughout.

ACRONYMS

ACU	Aid Coordination Unit
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DPCG	Development Partner Coordination Group
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
EFU	External Finance Unit, MINECOFIN
GoR	Government of Rwanda
HARPP	Harmonisation and Alignment in Rwanda for Programme and Projects
HLF	High Level Forum
ISP	Integrated Support Project / Programme (to MINECOFIN)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
NEX	National Execution (UNDP project management modality)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
SG	Secretary General
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office
USD	United States Dollar

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This evaluation was carried out at the request of the UNDP as an end term evaluation of the project for “Supporting Aid Harmonisation, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda.” The evaluation used a combination of explanatory case study methodology and elements of a participatory process evaluation framework to review the project in its entirety. All Steering Committee members, a few senior Government officials, multilateral and bilateral donors, Aid Coordination Unit (ACU) and External Finance Unit (EFU) staff, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were consulted as part of the evaluation process. An effort was made to draw conclusions from the broader perspective of aid coordination as a whole in Rwanda and not limit findings to the project per se. The evaluation team was fortunate to be allowed to observe meetings of the Development Partner Coordination Group and the Development Partner Meeting.
2. The evaluation found the project to be highly relevant to the mandate prescribed by the UN and the broader context of Aid Coordination in Rwanda. The project was able to put in place a single high level forum for coordination of aid in a country continuing to work towards longer-term recovery from conflict in a short period of time. All stakeholders unanimously endorsed the relevance and unique value of the Project.
3. Sustainability of the Project in the context of staffing and technical capacity of the EFU however was questionable. The EFU unit had only two staff (versus five staff of the ACU unit, as the project execution entity) handling the entire aid portfolio at the time of the visit. The project, despite sustained efforts to build capacity in the EFU with systematic training and capacity building initiatives, had not been able to put in place an efficient mechanism to phase out support to the EFU at the time of the visit of the evaluation team, largely due to rapid staff turnover of the EFU. This occurred despite long, frequent and in depth discussions by the Steering Committee on institutional capacity and human resource capacity issues of the EFU and the need to ensure a smooth transition of the project hand over. The project staff was known to carry out their functions beyond their terms of reference. Both donors and government partners found the project team to be neutral, highly efficient and congenial to work with.
4. The project carried out its functions on a day to day to basis with a complete understanding of the coordination of aid being a process and not a series of activities frozen in time. The quality of the policy dialogue, its frequency, and its relevance were operationalized by the unit in a coherent, consistent and efficient manner throughout the project period, thereby making it indispensable in terms of providing technical support to the Government of Rwanda (GoR). Staff turnover in the project and the EFU affected the efficiency of the project for short periods of time throughout its implementation.
5. In terms of outcome, the project had functioned satisfactorily on all of the objectives laid down by the project, had set in place aid management tools like a Development Assistance Database, and had assisted in the formulation of an Aid Policy. The project was able to build capacity in the monitoring and tracking of aid flows for the GOR given

the increase in donors and scaling up aid flows. The support to and formulation of the Aid Policy helped to put in place a framework for aid coordination, harmonization and alignment..

6. A substantial amount of project staff time was spent on providing technical inputs including setting agendas; supporting the Secretary General, Minister of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN), and other Ministers when requested; and organizing more than 14 meetings related to aid coordination a year including the DPCG, Development Partner Retreats, and Development Partner Meetings, as well as Budget Support Harmonisation Group meetings. The project achieved major impact by helping to put in place a sustainable, coherent mechanism for coordination of aid in a country (that is recovering from the effects of a previous conflict) among government and development partners, in a short period of time.
7. The Secretary General MINECOFIN confirmed that the GoR lacked technical capacity, and would not in the short term be in a position to handle the function of aid coordination with the same level of expertise and technical ability, with which the project had handled it. Providing technical capacity for formulating agendas, coordinating events like the Development Partner Retreat, and the Development Partner Meetings required expertise and capacity in aid coordination which is not easy to replicate he stated.
8. The Project was not able to build capacity or monitor sector and cluster coordination mechanisms as envisioned in the Project early on. Sector and cluster coordination mechanisms continued to be carried out in an ad hoc manner even three years after project implementation. The launch of the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) in 2007 necessitates the development partners in Rwanda to rethink and align the coordination framework in the context of the EDPRS pillars, and work towards enhanced coordination in those sectors and thematic areas in a more realistic manner.
9. Donors and stakeholders interviewed were of the opinion that the project and the ACU failed to take into account a coherent framework for handing over of the project function in a sustainable manner to the EFU. Issues of building technical capacity despite staff turnover, should have been handled by the project, and built into the project framework at commencement, they said. This evaluation came to the conclusion that typically in a country that is working to recover from conflict technical, institutional and human resource capacity needs of governments are much more vulnerable and difficult to build, and two years is much too unrealistic of a time frame to build capacity in a sustainable and meaningful manner.
10. Given the feedback from the stakeholders, this evaluation recommends that the Steering Committee reconsider the provision of technical support, under revised terms, and work towards assisting and supporting the EFU and the GoR in handling the aid coordination function for the 2008 period more as a functional year and not one of transition. Additionally, they should consider expanding the donor group and drawing up a plan to assist the GoR to align its aid coordination activities, in the context of the enhanced needs

of the EDPRS and renewed efforts to achieve the MDGs by 2015. The mandate of the EFU may be revisited to make align it to the evolving needs of the aid architecture of Rwanda. It is hoped that the evaluation will be found to be useful to the UNDP and to the broader Aid Coordination debate and implementation among the Development Partner Group in Rwanda.

Chapter 1: Background to the Evaluation

1.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

UNDP Rwanda requested Social Impact¹, USA, to evaluate and assess the project for “Supporting Aid Harmonisation, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda” against targets set in the project document and annual work plans since 2005.

The purpose of the review was to conduct a final evaluation to evaluate progress achieved by the project, evaluate the effectiveness of the activities in the implementation of the project, and evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the project in responding to beneficiaries needs.

1.2 Key Issues Addressed

The evaluation worked extensively to review, analyze and formulate recommendations on the broad areas defined by the TOR of the project including:

- Identifying other initiatives aimed at improving aid harmonisation and alignment across the Government of Rwanda (GoR) with a view to identifying how the Aid Coordination Unit (ACU) project is situated within these;
- Evaluating the extent to which the management and accountability structures of the project are appropriate in ensuring that it fulfils its stated objectives;
- Identifying areas in which the project had an impact on strengthening capacities in government;
- Highlighting capacity gaps; and
- Identifying issues of sustainability in the project going forward.

The evaluation was also expected to identify and document best practice in the provision of support with a view to informing the development of similar interventions in Rwanda and abroad.

1.3 Methodology of the Evaluation

The evaluation mission was carried out in Kigali during the period November 12-December 4, 2007, and thereafter in Washington for finalization of the report. Prior to the visit, the Lead Consultant reviewed documentation on Aid Coordination in Rwanda. The local consultant with assistance from the Aid Coordination Unit in Rwanda gathered documentation for the evaluation. The evaluation used the explanatory case study methodology to conduct the evaluation, essentially focusing on the “how and the why” of the aid coordination process, and used the evaluation principles of a process evaluation given the dynamics of “aid coordination”. During the visit, structured interviews were set up with senior government officials, Development Partners, Steering Group members, the ACU and the External Finance Unit (EFU) team, and International non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives. Secondary data were

¹ This evaluation was led by Rema Nair Balasundaram, with logistical assistance from Moses Turayazooka. The evaluation acknowledges the excellent support and assistance provided by the UNDP, and the ACU and EFU units in particular.

gathered from a desk review of project documentation, evaluations, and steering committee meeting minutes. Given the unique nature of the project and of Aid Coordination as a process, the team had the opportunity to attend the Development Partner Coordination Group meetings, a Rural Cluster meeting, and the High Level Government of Rwanda and Development Partners Meeting in Kigali. The advance planning and timing (by the UNDP) of the evaluation contributed greatly in part to the primary inputs, and subsequently to the quality and essence of the evaluation.

1.4 Structure of the Evaluation

The evaluation report structure and categories were discussed with the UNDP and the ACU team.

The rest of the report continues as follows: Chapter 2 provides the background and framework for aid coordination in a country that is recovering from a previous conflict; Chapter 3 provides information on the performance of the ACU and details of the project evaluation; Chapter 4 provides recommendations for consideration by the Steering Committee; and the Annexes provide additional relevant information.

Chapter 2: The Aid Coordination Framework in Rwanda

2.1 Introduction

Donor Roundtables on Rwanda were organized in Geneva in 1995 and 1996. In a meeting in London in 1999, the GoR established a working group of like minded donors consisting of Canada, Netherlands, Sweden, UK, EU, African Development Bank, IMF and the World Bank. This working group was slowly expanded over a period of time, and is now termed as the Development Partner Coordination Group (DPCG). The DPCG is a high-level in-country consultative body, leading development cooperation in Rwanda. Initially chaired by the UNDP, it is currently co-chaired by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) and the UN Resident Coordinator.

Aid Coordination in Rwanda has historically been handled by the UN and was first partly handled through a trust fund managed by the UNDP. Currently, the GoR has two Donor Coordinating groups: the DPCG and the Budget Support Harmonisation Working Group. Unlike other countries that use a Consultative Group mechanism that is headed by the partner country and the World Bank, or a Roundtable mechanism that is headed by a partner country and the UN, Rwanda is unique in setting up a DPCG. The first in country Development Partner meeting was held in Kigali in 2000. Currently, the DPCG meetings are held every two months with a Development Partner Retreat at the beginning of the calendar year and a Development Partner Meeting (DPM) at the end of it. The DPM is the highest-level forum in Rwanda, involving members of Cabinet, Parliament, members of the diplomatic corps and heads of development agencies. Additionally, donors meet and gather to discuss issues around sectors and thematic areas on a monthly basis.

In Rwanda, the primary responsibility for Aid Management and Coordination lies with the MINECOFIN. Within the Ministry, the Central Projects and External Finance Bureau (CEPEX) and the External Finance Unit are charged with aid coordination; however in practice, day to day responsibilities are split across various Ministerial Departments, such as the Budget Department and the Development Planning Unit (DPU). Several efforts have been made to enhance transparency and predictability of aid flows, including negotiation and briefing of donors, identifying areas for interventions in new areas with donors, coordinating the Development Partner meetings through the calendar year, the creation and commencement of a three-year rolling budgetary mechanism, and implementation of the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) covering 2001 – 2004, 2004 – 2007, and 2007-2010. Building on Vision 2020 as the government's long-term vision for national transformation, Rwanda produced its full home grown poverty reduction strategy, Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), towards the end of 2007. The GoR with support from the ACU formulated the Rwanda Aid Policy, which provides a framework for aid coordination.

2.2 Precursors to the Project

A secretariat was created in 2002 and initially located under the UNRCO– the Office of Development Partnerships.² The responsibilities of the office were:

- Providing secretarial support to the DPCG, including the establishment of a DPCG Website;
- Capacity building and awareness raising on coordination and harmonisation both within government and amongst other development partners;
- Strengthening of existing coordination mechanisms, such as the sectoral consultative groups (e.g. health, education);
- Establishment of and support to the related technical working groups – Harmonisation and Alignment in Rwanda for Projects and Programmes (HARPP) and the Budget Support Group – and the elaboration of their respective Partnership Frameworks;
- Bridging the gap between Global Agreements, such as the Rome Declaration, and National Strategy, and supporting the GoR in accessing global best practice in the area of aid coordination, harmonisation and alignment; and
- Carrying out pilot projects in the area of coordination, harmonisation and alignment, such as Joint Reviews of specific thematic sectors and technical ministries.

The Office also worked to formulate indicators to monitor aid effectiveness on both sides of the government and donors to be included as part of the next Poverty Reduction Strategy Process.

By providing high level support to the government and donor community – on both the organizational and substantive aspects of coordination - the UNRCO positioned itself as the key focal point for issues of coordination, harmonisation and alignment in Rwanda. Over the next three years, it worked with the GoR to make certain that this function could be fully and effectively adopted by the appropriate state structures, ensuring not only ownership, but also leadership, of the direction, management and oversight of development assistance in Rwanda.

2.3 Support to Harmonisation and Alignment in Rwanda and the Aid Coordination Unit

In order to address capacity needs and ensure that coordination mechanisms have the support necessary to function effectively, the GoR requested that an ACU be established within the Office of the UNRCO. The resulting ACU, established in 2005, supports the External Finance Unit in the short term, until such time that the EFU can take over the role of harmonisation, alignment and coordination of aid in its entirety.

The major objective of this ACU project was to contribute to: “Improvement in the effect and impact of development assistance in Rwanda, in support of the national priorities of poverty reduction, and the international commitment to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.” Through the delivery of key outcomes, outputs, and activities the project was expected to result in improved aid efficiency in support of poverty reduction through:

² Annex II, Strengthening Aid Coordination in Rwanda.

- Improved capacity to government in the area of aid delivery and management;
- A reduction of transaction costs for government – donor interaction resulting from: a) efficiency savings from a reduction in duplicative activities; b) increased delivery rates and; c) rationalization of certain donor processes, where possible through aligning them behind government systems; and
- Increased awareness amongst government and donors of potential efficiency gains and costs savings resulting from the implementation of a harmonisation agenda.

Since inception, the ACU has executed a UNDP Direct Execution project, with the UNDP undertaking both management and project assurance, and advisory roles.³ The ACU was first housed at the UNDP, but later shifted to the MINECOFIN office and worked with the EFU with the intention of building capacity in a meaningful manner.

Full responsibility for aid coordination functions was expected to be handed over to the EFU by December 2007, with a one year transition for the period of 2008. As of January 2008, the operational modality for implementation by the EFU is National Execution (NEX). This implies that the GoR will assume overall responsibility for the management of the assistance, and the UNDP will continue to provide assurance and advisory services. Use of the NEX modality for functioning was agreed to by the Steering Committee in 2007 and is consistent with the desire to build national capacities and ownership in the execution of capacity development initiatives.

As of 2008, it is expected that a large part of the support provided by this project will be in the context of an evolving programme-based approach for support to capacity development in MINECOFIN.⁴ This means that the project will provide support to MINECOFIN consistent with the needs identified in its Strategic Development Plan,⁵ and in a manner that contributes directly to the implementation of those areas of the Integrated Support Project (ISP) work plan that relate to the effective management of external aid. In addition to this substantive support to aid management and aid effectiveness, the project will provide technical assistance to MINECOFIN (and in particular the ISP Secretariat) to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry to fully manage and execute capacity development initiatives in this area from 2009. This aspect is expected to form an integral part of the project's phase-out strategy, strengthening both government ownership and confidence in the systems through which future capacity development initiatives will be executed.

2.4 Steering Committee of the Project

A Steering Committee, composed of MINECOFIN, UNDP, Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, provides oversight and guidance in the

³ The UNDP Guidelines for Direct Execution govern execution in countries with special development situations, as well as a number of other particular situations (e.g. support to the UNRC).

⁴ Draft Project Document for Review, January, 2008. Support to Aid Coordination, Harmonisation and Alignment for Development Effectiveness in Rwanda.

⁵ Note: at the time of writing, MINECOFIN's Strategic Development Plan was not finalized. The contents of this document are therefore based on a draft made available to the project team in December 2007, and it has been agreed with MINECOFIN that minor revisions to this project's work plan may be undertaken during 2008 to reflect any substantive changes in the final version of the Ministry's Strategic Development Plan.

implementation of the project work plan. The Steering Committee is responsible for taking decisions on the management of the project and meets four times a year to discuss all issues related to the project, including detailed discussions on the management, implementation, and outputs of the project in the context of its stated objectives, such as capacity building. It also provides guidance to the ACU.

Funding of the project has been carried out with an initial allocation for the 2005-07 project periods, and thereafter for the transition period. Financial information is shared with the Steering Committee in a systematic manner. Steering Committee meetings are held quarterly. They have been managed by the Director of the EFU, the head of the ACU and the Steering Committee members. Steering Committee minutes indicate that discussions were held on the outcomes targeted by the project with in depth discussions on issues of capacity building throughout the project period.

2.5 Aid Coordination in Rwanda

The coordination of aid in Rwanda has been interpreted in a broader context, at the levels of international partnership, policy dialogue and formulation, central and decentralized levels of operations, and at the grassroots level, with the inclusion of NGOs, civil society, and Rwandan communities. While donors are willing to participate in aid coordination, the ultimate responsibility for the coordination process belongs to the GoR. Government ownership and leadership of the Aid agenda set the pace for the coordination mechanism and the partnership that resulted between an increasing number of development partners and stakeholders on the ground. Evidence of this was seen in the transparency with which Development Partners and the GoR interacted throughout the duration of the evaluation. Rwanda today is donor rich and hosts 17 bilateral organizations, 6 multilateral organizations, 11 UN agencies, 52 international NGOs and several hundred civil society organizations, making the aid coordination function even more important in this small nation that is recovering from a previous conflict.

Chapter 3: Project Evaluation

3.1 Relevance of the Project

The project was highly relevant in Rwanda. All stakeholders and donors stated that the relevance of the Project was unquestionable: the project was responsible for setting in place a reliable, transparent, sustainable, and efficient forum for ongoing dialogue between donors and partners. Although some donors felt that the project's activities were not sustainable or viable by the very nature of the terms under which it was set up, other donors felt that the DPCG should discuss the continuation of support to the GoR under revised terms, as well as the expansion of the basket fund group of donors to include others who might provide additional support to the GoR.

The NGO representatives felt that the project could have been more relevant if it had done more to include and identify civil society organizations (CSOs) that contribute to development effectiveness in some sectors, especially education and health. For instance, although church groups play a seminal role in the provision of services in the country, some of them had been left out of the DPM. Similarly, NGOs would like to see the ACU/EFU set up a directory that categorizes NGOs by functionality and service delivery categories, information that is difficult to obtain in Rwanda. Currently the only site that provides information on NGOs is MINALOC; however at the time of this review the information on the MINALOC site was not updated and provided information on only one part of the NGO profile.

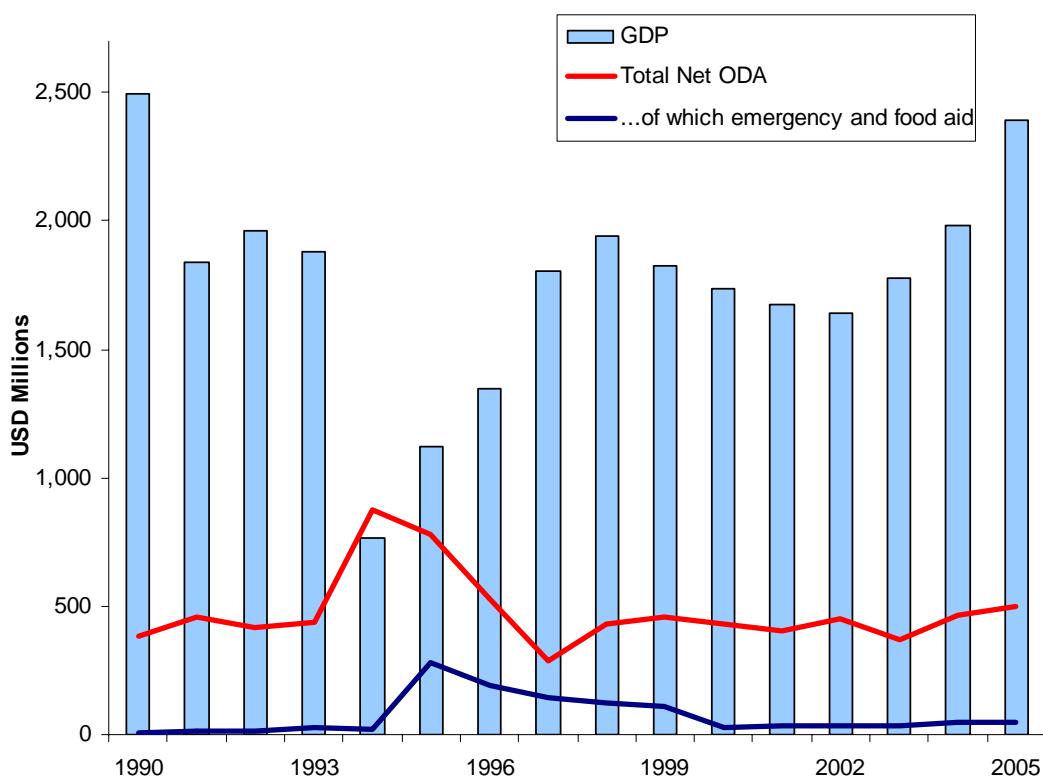
The relevance of the project and the ACU can also be explained by the leadership and functionality that they provide to the DPCG and the DPM that was held during the time of the visit of the consulting team in Rwanda. While the DPCG was chaired by the Secretary General (SG) of MINECOFIN and the UNRCO, major support for the meeting in terms of agenda setting, drafting of minutes, backup documentation, and provision of information on all matters related to the meeting was provided by the ACU team. A repeat of these functions to a higher degree was seen during the DPM. The technical and analytical skills necessary to handle the multiplicity of these tasks was apparent throughout the event and in follow up thereafter.

Lastly, the relevance of the project can be seen in the context of aid flows. This is discussed more in-depth in the following section.

3.1.1 Relevance and Aid Flows

The relevance of the support project is also well placed in the context of the substantial scaling up of aid flows to Rwanda: in 2006 alone total Official Development Assistance was USD602.7 million, a flow of aid that is equivalent to 26.5% of Rwanda's GDP. Like much of Sub Saharan Africa, Rwanda is highly aid dependent (see Figure 1). The project and the ACU play a critical role in aggregating such information on aid flows by donor and instrument in very close collaboration with the EFU and MINECOFIN.

Figure 1: Trends in Aid Flows



Source: OECD-DAC International Development Statistics and the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda.

3.1.1.1 Sources and Composition of Foreign Assistance

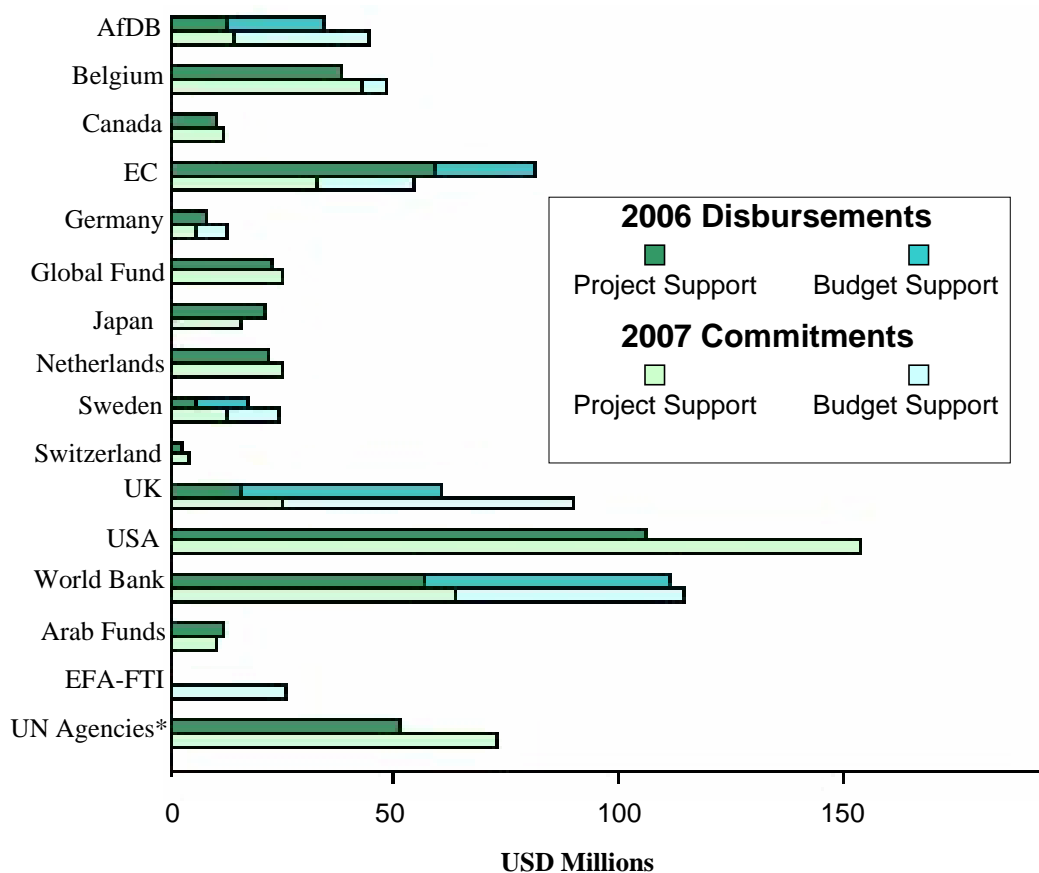
In 2006, 50% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) disbursed to Rwanda came from multilateral donors and consortia (African Development Bank, The Education for All Fast Track Initiative, European Commission, Global Fund, UN Agencies and World Bank Group). As shown in Figure 2, most Development Partners have scaled up ODA significantly between 2006 and 2007; on average, bilateral donors were found to be scaling up ODA faster than multilaterals. In 2007 multilateral donors are expected to disburse up to 46% of ODA.

Figure 2 also shows whether the aid is for project support or budget support. In line with the Rwanda Aid Policy, Development Partners are increasingly providing funds through budget support mechanisms. In 2006, 26% of external grants were in the form of budget support, and this is expected to increase to 30% in 2007 as Belgium, Germany, and EFA-FTI have joined the existing group of budget support donors.⁶ These increases are set to continue with the Netherlands committed to sector budget support in 2007, and Development Partners, in general, eager to meet the 2010 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness targets related to the use of

⁶ This currently includes African Development Bank, European Commission, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the World Bank.

programme-based approaches. Currently, the World Bank and the United Kingdom are the largest budget support donors.⁷

Figure 2: Composition of External Resources in 2006 and 2007



Data Source: Rwanda Development Assistance Database (DAD).

3.1.1.2 Development Assistance Database

Monitoring aid flows continues to be a challenge in parts of Africa. In Rwanda, the project helped to set in place the Development Assistance Database (DAD), which helps to monitor aid flows in the country, and is a direct reflection of the project requirement in this regard. All stakeholders confirmed that the DAD was a valuable asset to the GoR, but felt it still had to work towards synchronizing its information with information on aid flows from other departmental units.

Specifically the DAD is a live database that captures aid flows in a systematic manner within a reliable framework and includes aggregate aid flows through and outside of budget support. This is valuable for a country like Rwanda that continues to work towards recovery from conflict.

⁷ Much of this section comes from Strengthening Partnerships, GoR and Development Partners, Rwanda, 2007.

Given that the DAD is a live database dependent on donors to provide inputs, updating the information takes time, some negotiation and follow-up by ACU and EFU staff to keep the information current. The DAD is handled in its entirety by one technical assistant contracted by the project, who also handles other IT related functions also carried out on a daily basis. Initially, the DAD was handled by this staff member and an Aid Management Officer from the EFU, who subsequently left the position. Currently, it is handled by one staff member from the project.

3.2 Performance of the Project Relating to Project Document

The UNDP project summary document dated March 31, 2005 includes a terms of reference, a results framework and key tasks for the project. These are discussed below.

3.2.1 Terms of Reference

This project inception document did not take into account the dynamic nature of Aid Coordination as a Policy Dialogue in the context of Rwanda. The stakeholders involved in project formulation perceived aid coordination in Rwanda as a “one shot activity,” rather than an intensive, evolving process, and did not build a coherent strategic framework taking this into account. This can be seen in the document’s Terms of Reference, which has remained stagnant over time, even though in the short span of two years, the aid coordination framework and aid architecture of the GoR has evolved and grown. Given the scaling up that donors and the GoR have undertaken, the role and functions of the ACU have in effect grown compared to those envisaged at the time the project was formulated.

3.2.2 Results Framework

The Result Framework was formulated at the initiation of the project (see Annex E). It does not provide for the additionality of functions that have been taken on by the project and carried out since its inception. Steering Committee minutes and project progress reports were more detailed and relevant to the evolution of the function and of the project as a whole. The Results Framework provides for outputs which were meager and outdated in some sections, while outcomes were not even mentioned.⁸ However, progress reports to the Steering Committee by the project provided for a detailed listing of outputs quarterly and in a timely manner. The Results Framework for the Project needs to be revisited to make it more current and suited to evolving aid architecture.

The Results Framework did not capture the dynamic nature of the aid policy dialogue that was evident in the implementation of the Project per se. The overall objectives outlined in the Results Framework actually differ from those in the Project document. They are stated as: “Improvement in the effect and impact of development assistance in Rwanda, in support of the national priorities of poverty reduction, and the international commitment to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.” This is then broken down into two broad areas discussed below.

⁸ A copy of the Results Framework is provided in the Annex.

3.2.2.1 GoR leading aid coordination, harmonisation & alignment process in Rwanda under a clear framework to support PRS implementation

The outcome indicator for this objective is: “By the end of the project, the functions and responsibilities have been taken over by the GoR.” The outputs for this objective are analyzed briefly below:

Clear Framework for aid coordination established and implemented. The Rwanda Aid Policy was developed following the signing of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness by Rwanda and all of its donors, committing them, among other things, to changing their delivery of aid to increase harmonisation among donor interventions, align aid to national policies and increase mutual accountability. The Aid Policy was created as a framework for setting out how the Government wishes to see aid delivered to Rwanda, including its preference for aid to be delivered in the modality of general budget support, followed by sector budget support. The Project played a lead role in formulating the Aid Policy. All the areas of work listed in this section were carried out in a highly satisfactory manner. In terms of the provision of technical support to the Government, this is carried out on a daily basis by the project team, and consists of drafting briefs, providing technical inputs on coordination issues involving donors, and handling technical inputs to donor partner meetings. The establishment of the joint funding mechanism was set up at the inception of the project. Awareness raising for government and donors on issues of aid coordination and harmonisation, is also carried out in an ongoing manner, and has been scaled up with the number of donors and increases in aid flows. Project staff engage in monitoring of aid flows, identifying new donors and areas for funding, and coordinating efforts among development partners thereby leading to better implementation of these activities in Rwanda. Staff continue to identify potential new donors on an annual basis.

Functioning consultative mechanisms to improve alignment of development assistance behind government priorities. The Project was able to provide support and preparation to the execution of the DPM, and the DPCG and was able to set in place Regular Development Partner Meetings of a high standard. Clarification and support to an active functioning cluster system for government and donor consultation including support to sector wide approaches was initially commenced by the Project with inputs in terms of clarification of framework for clusters, assisting in the formulation of TORs, annual work plans, reporting and organizational structures, but later on was lost sight of and was not supported beyond the initial period.

Capacity Building for Government of Rwanda. The capacity building of staff of the EFU was not sustained due to loss of absorptive and technical capacity from staff turnover. Despite substantial staff training and capacity building, project failure in this output presents a challenge for the Government and the Project. A more detailed discussion on capacity building is presented later on in this chapter.

Integration of civil society into the discourse on harmonisation, alignment and coordination in order to improve aid delivery. The Project was able to establish links and a working modality between civil society and the GoR and the DPCG effectively. In 2007, for the first time several NGOs and civil society were also provided with a special pre briefing before the Development Partner Meeting to familiarize them with the meetings. The large numbers of NGOs and civil

society in Rwanda also poses challenges for the Project, since many of them in the interior parts are not listed by the Ministry that monitors activities in this sector. Most interaction / consultation with the NGO/CSO community therefore happens through umbrella organisations, who could also benefit from enhanced capacities to effectively manage their internal consultative processes.

Demonstrated reduction in transaction costs to GoR. This was carried out throughout the project phase. Initially the project provided support for joint reviews on the effectiveness of donor support to MINECOFIN, supported a Joint Review of the Education Sector, and worked to disseminate key findings on harmonisation to other ministries and departments in a small way. The Project provided substantial inputs to the HLF and to the Paris Benchmarking surveys. Strengthening the Budget Support Framework came naturally with the support it had already provided to the DPCG and continues to do so currently. Donors were able to engage in discussions with the project staff for funding and coordination areas in addition to the GOR in an open and transparent environment, which they found very helpful.

3.2.2.2 Improved government capacity for effective aid management

This includes the following:

Improvement in the availability, quality and organization of information on aid and donor activity in Rwanda leading to improved integration of aid flows into explicit national development goals and strategies, and into the national budgetary process. This was carried out in a highly satisfactory manner and continues to be a work in progress. The project was able to establish an agreed monitoring framework for aid effectiveness as part of the EDPRS and also contribute to enhanced government capacity to monitor aid effectiveness. Project staff are called upon to lead, support and contribute to all ongoing policy dialogues between donors and partners in an ongoing manner across sectors and clusters as need be.

Established information tools to document and monitor donor activity and development assistance in Rwanda. The Project helped to set in place a government owned Development Partner website, which is currently considered one of the best by the development community, and provides information on harmonisation and alignment. The plans to expand the site to become a central donor coordination online resource did not happen, as further technical development of the website was not carried out. A more detailed discussion on information tools is presented later on in this chapter.

Integration of Rwanda into Global Fora on Aid Harmonisation and Alignment to ensure that Rwanda is at the forefront of international best practice. The Project formulated and prepared Rwanda as a case study for the High Level Forum (HLF) in 2005. As a follow up to the HLF, the Project was able to build and set in place one of the best harmonisation cases in a country that is working to recover from a previous conflict, and position Rwanda as a key partner in the process. The updating of recognized information sharing to ensure that Rwanda's best practices and lessons learned are shared continues to be work in progress. A more detailed analysis of this area is provided below.

3.2.3 Key Tasks

The project summary document states that the unit would be composed of a Head of Unit, an Assistant and a team of four specialists that would be responsible for the implementation of the project including the following key tasks:

- General logistical support to the DPCG, including drafting of agendas, drafting and circulation of minutes;
- General informational support to the overall Cluster System, including upkeep of a calendar of events and a website;
- Documentation and information clearing house for coordination, harmonisation and alignment activities;
- Facilitation of communication flows both horizontally – between donors and government – and also across Ministries on issues related to cooperation, harmonisation and alignment; and
- Substantive and logistical support to HARPP (Harmonisation and Alignment in Rwanda for Programme and Projects) and the Budget Support Donors Group.

3.2.3.1 General logistical support to the DPCG including drafting of agendas, drafting and circulation of minutes

The Project spends copious amounts of time on the aid policy dialogue and has provided general logistical support, not only to the DPCG, but also to the DPM and the Development Partner Retreat. The project assists with the formulation of and supports the presentations made by the senior MINECOFIN officials to international and national events on all issues of aid coordination. In terms of meetings, it drafts and formulates agenda for all meetings in collaboration with the EFU, SG MINECOFIN and UNRCO. It then drafts minutes within a relatively short period of the meetings being held and circulates them in a timely manner.

The Unit also works to provide logistical support to the Budget Support Harmonisation Group (BSHG). The BSHG is a working group of the DPCG, which unites all donors that contribute direct budget support. Quarterly meetings of the BSHG are chaired by the SG and Co-Chaired by a rotating representative of budget support donors.

The project played a major role in coordinating the myriad number of tasks required for the efficient organization of events, such as the DPM event, which hosted more than 400 participants from Ministries, bilateral and international organizations, NGOs and private sector. The Unit began organizing this event almost six months prior to its start. Some stakeholders felt that this function should be handed over to the EFU in its entirety and that the GoR must learn how to carry out this function. The SG MINECOFIN, on the other hand, felt that DPM was too huge an event to be handled by the EFU or MINECOFIN on its own given the lack of technical and operational skills and capacity of the EFU with only two staff. He went on to say, though, that the Project should, however, work towards building capacity in this regard over the next year or two. In fact, it was remarkable that the communiqué at the DPM, which was handled almost entirely by the project and took into account the deliberations and statement made by the Ministers, was ready for discussion before the end of the penultimate session.

3.2.3.2 General information support to the overall Cluster System including upkeep of a calendar of events and website

The Project has supported a good design of the Development Partner Website on behalf of the Government and donors in Rwanda. Aid Harmonisation in Rwanda and is hailed as Best Practice by the OECD DAC Monitoring the Paris Declaration Group. The website is kept up-to-date on all aspects, (barring some discussed below) related to the DPCG, DPM and others areas related to Aid Coordination. In comparison to websites of other countries, the DPG website had placed information in a more communicative manner and had posted many more relevant documents as well. The DPG Rwanda, like Tanzania, also observes a silent period for the GoR on discussions and negotiations on aid flows.

The ACU has also formulated a Harmonisation calendar, which provides information and milestones on aid coordination activities. As a whole, donors were by and large pleased with this approach.

That being said, the EFU (and its support project) has not been able to provide informational support to the overall Cluster System in a systematic manner, and has failed to recognize the unique opportunity the cluster and sector working groups provided for aid coordination and harmonisation. There are seven cluster and sector working groups mentioned on the DPCG site. With respect to the cluster and sector working groups, the only sector that has current information on the web site is that of the Health Sector Working Group. Some of the other sectors are mentioned but the information on these is not updated, and documents were last posted in February/March 2007. Donors seemed to think that this is also related to the lack of coherence within the Government-donor-CSO fora.

The UNDP Project Summary document in 2005 stated that the functioning of the various clusters has been uneven with some sectors being more active than the others. This remains the case in Rwanda even today. A more detailed analysis and description of this is provided below.

3.2.3.2.1 Harmonisation in the Cluster and Sector Working Groups in Rwanda

The Government of Rwanda has organized itself around clusters in development. In 2005, the GoR set up a Cabinet meeting to plan and formulate essential functions of Clusters in terms of overall goals, outcomes and activities. The essential functions of the sectors were to carry out discussions, share information and documentation, and integrate this into the planning process leading to improved alignment and effectiveness/efficiency in aid (see Table 1).

Now that EDPRS has been launched, these plans need to be revisited by the DPCG in a broader discussion of the function of the cluster and sector working groups. Additionally, the DPCG should review the findings of a Club du Sahel study in 2000, the HIV/AIDS Aid Coordination study and the UNDP project summary document of 2005, as they are still relevant to the performance of the project and to aid coordination in Rwanda as a whole. The former two

referred to the need to articulate sectoral policies, more technical capacity to monitor aid, improved information flows, and the need for greater capacity including more dedicated support to the cluster system .

While earlier references by MINECOFIN⁹ mention eight cluster working groups, some of which have continued to evolve over time, the Development Partner website provides information on seven cluster and sub cluster working groups in Rwanda. These include: Decentralization, Education, Gender, Health, HIV/AIDS, Private Sector Development, and Rural Development, Infrastructure and IT. Sector and Cluster Working Groups are used synonymously, and there is some confusion in this regard as well. All Working Groups are led by the relevant Ministry and a co chair who is usually a lead donor in that particular sector. Some clusters and sectors are of a cross cutting nature like that seen in Uganda and Tanzania. Many of the mandates of the Cluster

Table 1: Goals, Objectives, Outputs and Activities of Clusters

Table 2: Goals, objectives, outputs and activities of Clusters			
Overall goal	Specific objective	Outcomes	Activities
Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of aid.	Reduce transactions costs within the sector and across GoR	Transactions costs reduced	Sharing and disseminating information and documentation
	Strengthen GoR systems for planning implementation, monitoring without creating parallel systems.	Policies in place and disseminated	Information / documentation collection / dissemination.
			Perform or commission policy-relevant analytical work
		Strategy, and Action Plans in place and disseminated	Perform or commission strategic and operations-oriented analytical work
			Participate in developing annual sector action plan.
		Improved capacity in place	Participate in capacity development plan.
Align development partners behind GoR strategies, priorities, and plans	Generate support for PRS and achievement of MDGs	Joint support of MTEF achieved.	Participate in developing sector M&E framework.
			participate in reviews
	Facilitate understanding between GoR, donors, and operational agencies	Better understanding achieved	Share and disseminate information on policies and priorities
			Share and disseminate information and documentation.
Source: Excerpted from Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister 2005, Draft Cabinet Paper on Clusters.			

and Sector Working Groups are outdated; however work in some of the sector working groups are current, with some more advanced than the others. The Health and Education Sectors seemed

⁹ Challenges and Opportunities of Foreign Aid in a Post Conflict Situation: The Case of Rwanda .November, 2003, Protais Musoni, UNDESA, DPADM.

to be the most advanced. Sector wide approaches (SWAp) are being discussed in a number of sectors but the Education SWAp has made a great deal of progress since its inception in 2002.

The Working Group on HIV/AIDS which is a cross cutting working group carried out an evaluation on the Coordination of Aid in 2005. The review revealed that the structures in place were consistent with international best practice and that a great deal had been achieved. Among these achievements were putting in place a national strategic framework and operational plan, having already reviewed the implementation of the strategy, and having achieved a remarkable scaling-up of interventions to deal with the epidemic. However, the feeling persisted among partners that HIV/AIDS coordination could be strengthened in Rwanda. The team drew attention to six areas in particular where its work indicated scope for improvement: information flows between the partners (especially synthesis and dissemination of information in user friendly forms that serve coordination needs); clarification of the mandate, governance, and operations of the national coordinating authority; strengthening of the HIV/AIDS cluster and the multi-sector aspect of the response to HIV/AIDS; improving strategic vision of the challenge of HIV/AIDS for health sector development; and unifying UN agency activities into a comprehensive program.

Furthermore, the evolving dialogue around the EDPRS, and Budget support has resulted in Government and donors working to formulate mandates and strategies around several functional and cross cutting sectors. The EDPRS section of the Development Partner website refers to 12 Sector Working Groups and 21 sub cluster and cluster groupings. They are grouped into themes, for ease of prioritization later in the EDPRS process (see Table 2 and Annex A).

Table 2: Cluster and Sector Working Groups

Theme / Sector Working Group	Lead GOR Institution (Chair)	Lead (co-Chair)	Donor	Existing Structures	Coordination
Theme 1: Economic Growth, Private Sector Development and Infrastructure					
1. Economic Growth, Financial Sector Development and Employment	MINECOFIN	World Bank		None	
1.2 Private Sector Development	MINICOM	USAID			Private Sector Cluster
1.3 Infrastructure Including:	MININFRA	EC			Infrastructure Cluster Sub-Clusters
• Energy	• MININFRA	• World Bank		• None	
• Transport	• MININFRA	• EC			• Transport Sub-Cluster
• ICT	• MININFRA	• UNDP			• ICT Sub-Cluster
• Housing & Urban Development	• RALGA to select Major of a city	• German Coop.			• None
Theme 2: Rural Development					
2.1 Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	MINAGRI	World Bank		Rural Cluster	Development
2.2 Environment and Land Use Management	MINITERE	UNDP		Rural Cluster	Development
Theme 3: Human Development					
3.1 Education, Science and Technology, R&D	MINEDUC	DFID		Education Partners Group	Development
3.2 Health, Population and HIV/AIDS	MINISANTE	Belgium		Health Sector Cluster HIV/AIDS Sub-Cluster	
3.3 Water and Sanitation	MINITERE	ADB		Water Sub-Cluster	
3.4 Social Protection	MINALOC	DFID		None	
Theme 4: Good Governance					

4.1 Justice	MINIJUST	UNDP	Justice Sector Coordination Group
4.2 Decentralisation, Citizen Participation, Empowerment, Transparency and Accountability	MINALOC	Netherlands	None
4.3 Security	TBD	TBD	None
Multi-Disciplinary Group on Cross-Cutting Issues			
Cross-Cutting Issues Working Group	MINECOFIN	DFID and UNDP	Representation from existing clusters: Rural Development, Capacity Bldg & Public Sector Reform, Gender, Decentralisation, HIV/AIDS

3.2.3.2.2 The Rural Cluster Working Group

The evaluation team attended a meeting of the Rural Development Cluster Working Group. The meeting minutes and agenda very clearly term it as a Rural Cluster Meeting. The Cluster Working Group is chaired by the SG Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) and co-chaired by the World Bank. The agenda for the meeting on November 19, 2007 was focused to a large extent on agriculture. The discussions that took place at the meeting were predominantly of a technical nature.¹⁰ The interaction and communication between donors, ministries, NGOs, and the private sector were transparent and honest. The SG set the tone of the meeting by requesting technical inputs in whatever form or kind to enhance efficiency of the work program for the cluster as a whole.

The SG MINAGRI stated that the cluster does function as a rural cluster and there are two levels of meetings that are held: one is at the level of Ministries where donors are invited only on an as needed basis; and the other is the donor-government level, which includes ministries, donors, CSOs and private sector where relevant. The organization of the Rural Cluster meetings is handled by MINAGRI staff and the agenda is usually formulated in consultation with the co chair, with a predominant role played by SG MINAGRI. It is important to note that a technical assistant financed by DFID plays a crucial role supporting the work of this cluster in collaboration with other ministry staff. The frequency of the meetings in this cluster is high. The Rural Cluster Working Group meets weekly to discuss issues that arise in the cluster.

The SG mentioned that technical expertise and skills in agriculture, crop intensification, good monitoring and evaluation, lessons learned and good practice in agriculture were areas that were constantly being worked with by the group. She also stated that she was very much aware that the minutes of the meetings and the details of what had been handled over the year in the cluster were not reflected in the DPG site or even the MINAGRI site. She went on to say that documentation of the cluster would be attended to in future.

3.2.3.3 Documentation and information clearing house for coordination, harmonisation and alignment activities

The Project has acted as an information and clearing house for coordination, harmonisation and alignment activities throughout the project period. In fact, documentation indicates that the role has grown with the scaling up of aid flows and of donors in Rwanda. The role extends both

¹⁰ The previous meeting held on November 7, 2007 was devoted to the Integrated Development Project.

internally in Rwanda and externally to a global level and encompasses a number of different activities, such as:

- Handling the OECD DAC requests for the Paris Declaration Baseline survey and other data, which are somewhat frequently requested throughout the year. The Paris Baseline survey for next year will need to be handled by the EFU, with support from project TA, in early 2008.
- Coordinating responses of all donors and ensuring that information provided is accurate across ministries and development partners, both of which take up substantial amounts of time.
- Presenting information on the Aid Coordination Framework in Rwanda and a presentation at the OECD DAC by MINECOFIN officials, which finally resulted in the OECD DAC recognizing it as best practice.
- Day to day coordination, and stock taking of documentation and reporting on events related to aid flows and coordination as a whole in Rwanda.
- Providing assistance to the UN Resident Coordinator and to donors. These tasks take enormous amounts of staff time, given that the policy dialogue with donors and the UN are of an ongoing nature. Steering Committee minutes reflect discussions on some of these activities.
- Over the last few weeks prior to the evaluation, the project team organized a peer learning event with a delegation from Mozambique that came to visit Rwanda to study the coordination framework and the manner in which donor support was being channelled to it (i.e. the ACU-managed project).

3.2.3.4 Facilitating communication flows both horizontally – between donors and government – and also across Ministries on issues related to cooperation, harmonisation and alignment

The project has played a catalytic role in facilitating communication flows both horizontally between donors and the government, to a larger extent than that across ministries. The project did not take into account that there are several local and provincial level authorities that also handle external aid and that coordination and technical skills should be extended to these units as well. Donors were of the opinion that Cluster and Sector Working Group chairs were not familiar with the aid coordination mechanisms; MINECOFIN, with support from project TA, would need to work to build capacity with sectoral ministries in a more meaningful manner.

That being said, during the course of the visit, the unit staff was engaged in briefing several line ministries on donor engagement and cooperation issues in certain sectors. However, some of these activities are being now handed over to the EFU staff that deal with bilateral and multilateral issues. As pointed out in the Steering Committee Minutes of February 2007, the project staff does not have the sectoral expertise or technical capacity to provide extensive sector support across Ministries. This need is likely to be exacerbated with the increasing importance of alignment of aid in the sectors and line ministries in the future. However, the ACU-led DPG website was the only website with information on the various clusters and sectors. Donors felt that the project played a role in coordinating this aspect early on in the project and it was lost sight of later on.

3.2.3.5 Substantive and logistical support to HARPP (Harmonisation and Alignment in Rwanda for Programme and Projects) and the Budget Support Donors Group

The ACU handled substantive logistical support to the HARPP when it was functioning; currently, the HARPP does not exist. The evolution and strengthening of the Budget Support Harmonisation Group has resulted in the ACU organizing and undertaking much of the logistical support for the Group currently. The Budget Support Donors Group spend two weeks on budget support issues spread through the year, and the ACU handles these and other ad hoc meetings in its entirety. However, given the large portfolio of ODA flows from the bilaterals for project and programme support, coordination of these flows and engaging these donors takes up a fair amount of time.

3.3 Financial Management of the Project

A quick review of the financial management of the project indicated that much of the funds provided by the basket fund donors were used for hiring national and international staff and for handling the logistics of meetings with the GoR on aid coordination issues. The ACU head and staff spend substantial chunks of time contributing inputs to the UNRCO, UNDP, and to development partners in addition to handling the DPCG, DPM and DPR.. The evaluation team would like to recommend that this detail of funding also be discussed with the larger DPCG group and MINECOFIN. The basket fund donors did fund the DPM in the past and in 2007 a large portion of the event's costs were absorbed by the Government.

Donors had diverse views on the financial management of the project. Some were not familiar with the funding modalities, and others were of the opinion that the funding of capacity development support to the EFU should be part of the overall funding mechanism of the Government and it should not be separated. UNDP country offices in Cambodia and Laos provide for substantial technical expertise to client country governments by paying for staff that provides expertise on the function of aid coordination. However, the aid is provided through core staff that contributes to both technical assistance and capacity building. In other cases, basket fund mechanisms with groups of donors are also set up to provide expertise and assistance to coordination aid flows like that in Sri Lanka, and the Maldives, the former by the World Bank, and the latter by UNDP. In the case of Sri Lanka, a recent evaluation of the Aid Coordination Unit revealed that the function was critical to the country, and it should be continued for another two years.

In Rwanda, a review of the project's financial statements shared at the Steering Committee meetings seemed to indicate aggregate figures, providing an overview of the trends in utilization of the funds. The statements also reflect how the aid modality and processes have evolved over time, with outcome measures being clearly stipulated in progress reports by the UN. The meeting minutes seem to suggest that donors are still considering whether support should be provided to the UNDP-managed project or to the Integrated Support Project (ISP) that will fund the EFU/MINECOFIN. At the time of the visit, the SG MINECOFIN with the Head of the ACU was still eliciting support for the interim support project during the transition period.

3.4 Outcomes of the Project

The project Summary document states that the project is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- Improved capacity to government in the area of aid delivery and management;
- A reduction of transaction costs for government – donor interaction resulting from a) efficiency savings from a reduction in duplicative activities; b) increased delivery rates and; c) rationalization of certain donor processes, where possible through aligning them behind government systems;
- Increased awareness amongst government and donors of potential efficiency gains and costs savings resulting from the implementation of a harmonisation agenda.

An assessment to the extent possible of these outcomes is provided below.

3.4.1 Improved capacity to government in the area of aid delivery and management

Although a relevant focus for the ACU and the UN, supporting a national dialogue and providing technical cooperation between central government, ministries and civil society presents enormous challenges in a country like Rwanda. Most ministries and the central government lack capacity to coordinate and manage aid. The ACU team worked constantly to build capacity and work alongside EFU staff on a daily basis, and even housed themselves in the office of the Government outside of the UN to carry out the task more efficiently. Despite repeated efforts and extensive discussions at the Steering Committee to take into account issues of staffing and building capacity in the EFU, the project at the time of the evaluation did not have an effective mechanism in place to hand over its responsibilities to the EFU.

However, EFU staff felt that working side by side on a daily basis helped build capacity in a meaningful manner. Writing, drafting, and analytical and negotiating skills were not easily learnt or acquired, and the technical assistance provided helped build this capacity among EFU staff. The SG MINECOFIN stated that the Government would need some more lead time to help build technical capacity on aid coordination issues. Nevertheless, although staff that had been trained was not at the EFU at the time of handing over, substantial capacity had been built among Rwandan national staff throughout the project phase.

Gaps in technical capacity of the government and donors, as raised in the HIV/AIDS aid coordination study, continue to pose challenges. Some donors were concerned about the GOR being unable to handle the transition period due to lack of capacity, whereas others felt that it would only learn if it were forced to do handle coordinating functions, on its own and would be enabled eventually. In terms of aid delivery, NGOs seemed to think that the mandate of the ACU/EFU should be broadened to include CSOs and International NGOs in Rwanda since they played an important role in development effectiveness.

3.4.2 A reduction of transaction costs for government donor interaction

Much work in this area has grown beyond the purview of the project since both aid flows and numbers of donors have increased, hence attribution of results in this area to the project per se would be difficult to conclude. However, provided below are some observations in this context.

A reduction of transaction costs for government and donor interaction was to result from the following:

a) Efficiency savings from a reduction in duplicative activities. The ACU handled donor and government interactions with respect to aid flows in a systematic manner. Initial consultations between government and donors, and technical inputs for legal documentation were handled in its entirety by the team, thereby reducing substantial transaction costs for both donors and the Government. Formulation of coordination tools like the Rwanda Aid Policy and the Development Assistance Database to track and monitor aid flows also contributed in great measure to reducing transaction costs. The transparency with which both donors and the GoR interacted with the ACU as a neutral player was found to be remarkable and contributed greatly to the efficacy and progress of the aid harmonisation and alignment framework in the country. The ACU also played a seminal role in interacting with donors on aid flows and management issues in a timely manner, thereby making it easier for the GoR and reducing the burden of the client country.

b) Increased delivery rates. This area continues to be a work in progress and was difficult to assess based on discussions and review of project documents. In some discussions with EFU staff, they stated that despite improvements in the DAD and in tracking aid flows from donors, monitoring of aid flows and their delivery rates continues to pose challenges for the donors and partners as a whole, especially with respect to aid that is received outside budget support. UNDP project progress reports stated that continued sensitization of stakeholders and enhancements of the DAD system were needed.

c) Rationalization of certain donor processes, where possible through aligning them behind government systems. The OECD DAC survey states that most donors in Rwanda have aligned their strategies with poverty reduction strategy priorities. However, this has not yet, in most cases, been translated into real alignment with sector strategies or use of country systems, and continues to be a work in progress. Some reflection of the difficulties in this regard is evident from the cluster and sector working group discussions of work plans. This evaluation found it difficult to attribute the lack of progress in this area to the ACU per se. Donor capacity has also been built over time, and several donors provide secondment of staff to a few government line ministries. Additionally, some donors have pooled arrangements with each other in certain clusters and sectors.

Since several elements of these aspects have been referred to and analyzed by the OECD DAC in its survey of the Paris Declaration Baseline, this evaluation is referring to the overall findings provided in the Rwanda Country study (see Table 3).

Table 3. Overall Findings of the Paris Declaration Baseline

DIMENSIONS	BASELINE	CHALLENGES	PRIORITY ACTIONS	OVERVIEW
Ownership	Strong	Lack of clear links between local plans/budgets and national strategy.	Continue capacity building at the local level.	Challenges and priority actions
Alignment	Moderate	Limited use of national systems, low reporting of aid in the budget.	Improve data on aid disbursements, step up donor use of public financial management systems.	
Harmonisation	Low-Moderate	Reliance on stand-alone project aid in most sectors.	Develop sector-wide approaches in health, agriculture, land and decentralisation.	
Managing for results	Low-Moderate	Lack of capacity in line ministries.	Build on national monitoring and evaluation framework, bring other sectors up to the standard of education.	
Mutual accountability	Low-Moderate	Lack of formal mutual accountability mechanism.	Establish mutual accountability mechanism focused on Rwandan priorities.	

Source: OECD DAC Survey, 2007

3.4.3 Increased awareness amongst government and donors of potential efficiency gains and costs savings resulting from the implementation of a harmonisation agenda

The ACU has worked consistently to ensure outcome on this aspect throughout the implementation of the aid coordination agenda. This has been evident in the manner in which the policy dialogue has been handled at the level of the ACU but also at the level of the UNRCO. The importance of aid coordination and the complexity of aid flows have been taken into account in the handling of tasks by the ACU on a day to day basis. Some donors had questions about efficiency of the unit and stated that the ACU could have some of the DPCG related tasks handled by nationals rather than international staff. Others felt that they did not know enough about the details of the ACU to talk coherently about issues of efficiency. The extensive work carried out by the project's technical assistants in the formulation of the Rwanda Aid Policy and the briefing workshops carried out of stakeholders in this regard are also good examples of the implementation of the harmonisation agenda. They will work in the long term towards potential efficiency gains and in developing a coherent framework for aid harmonisation.

3.5 Role of the UNDP and the UN as a Facilitator and Its Comparative Advantage

A discussion of the ACU and the project cannot be complete without looking at the role and the mandate of the UN at the country level. The choice of the Resident Coordinator's office as the interim host agency resulted from its ongoing central role in donor coordination in Rwanda at the inception of the project. The ACU and the UNDP have played three important roles in Rwanda: a neutral provider of aid coordination services; provider of technical cooperation for aid coordination and management; and provider of substantial inputs for a national aid coordination framework. The presence of the UN at the country level provided its own comparative advantage at the time that the ACU was established. Some donors felt that now this role could be handled by the GoR. However, the UNDP's presence at the country level provided the organization with two relevant strengths: 1) a field office that was conversant with country specific aid relations; and 2) access to grant funds, instruments, technical cooperation and expertise for aid coordination and management. The ACU as a unit exploited this comparative advantage throughout the project period. However, this evaluation is of the opinion that there remains a unique nature and combination of UN inputs, carried out in Rwanda over this period of time, that resulted in a consistent and sustained policy dialogue with valuable results, that needs to be explored further for learning and application in other parts of Africa.

3.6 Provision of Technical Cooperation for Aid Coordination and Management

The ACU, through its project, worked to build capacity in EFU throughout the project implementation period. This was done through the hiring of international staff well versed in aid coordination issues; substantial identification of training programs for EFU staff to strengthen their capacity to provide aid coordination services; and technical cooperation for aid coordination and management. Sadly, despite efforts to integrate ACU with the EFU, staff that was trained left the EFU and this aspect of capacity building could not be sustained.

3.7 Sustainability

The project document summary states that the UN emphasizes the need to build indigenous capacity as the only sustainable solution to poverty reduction. Despite several in depth discussions on the issue of sustainability of the ACU/EFU at the Steering Committee throughout the 2005-2007 period, the ACU was not able to put in place a sustainable framework for the phasing out of the unit to be handed over to the EFU. This was due to several factors, including chronic capacity constraints of the Government, staff turnover of the EFU, a scaling up of aid flows in Rwanda, and the evolving aid harmonisation agenda in Rwanda. Steering Committee meeting members raised the issue of the EFU mandate and the need for it to be revisited given the issues in scaling up and the changing aid architecture as early as February 2007. The Steering Committee may consider revisiting the mandate of the EFU in a more coherent manner to ensure that its functions are clear.

The initial project document did not recognize that Aid Management is the process of integrating external and internal resources in the implementation of local development programs and activities. It requires full transfer of ownership of aid from foreign to national institutions, and the integration of foreign aid into national procedures for planning, priority setting, budgeting, implementation and all development activities. Hence aid management requires capacity in all national institutions involved in programs that are funded by external aid. Capacity constraints of

ministries throughout the national framework in Rwanda limit the impact of aid management measures taken by the ACU. The UNDP project summary document that articulates the objectives of the Project failed to take into account the broader aspects related to capacity building and mentioned the dedication of staff personnel within various ministries and departments tasked with the oversight and implementation of harmonisation and coordination activities. Other than the EFU, this was not evident in the case of the other ministries, or if it had been carried out, it had not been documented in a coherent manner. Development partners felt that the only way the EFU could be sustained was if it were manned in the same manner as the ACU with the same level of technical skills and number of staff to ensure continuity.

3.8 The Counterfactual and Other Pertinent Issues Raised by Stakeholders

All donors agreed that the ACU was primarily responsible for putting in place a coherent aid coordination framework in Rwanda. In the absence of the ACU, the quality of the policy dialogue on aid in Rwanda would be poor and the Government would face greater capacity and management constraints. Some donors felt that an emphasis on aid effectiveness was more important than discussions on aid modalities and harmonisation. Discussions at the DPCG and other retreat meetings were substantive; however, donors still tended to perceive the coordination of aid in terms of collation or aggregation of funds, and not as a series of complex processes or ongoing dialogue. Some donors observed that there were no links between what was discussed at the cluster or sector meetings and that at the DPCG. Others felt that a more serious discussion of the evolving aid architecture, the role of the DPCG, the role of cluster and sector working groups, and the need for a strategic policy dialogue around the issues of public sector management principles was necessary in Rwanda. Others questioned as to whether a Development Partner Retreat and a Development Partner Meeting were both needed, as they took up vast amounts of time of the ACU and all stakeholders.

3.9 Efficacy of the Project

The ACU unit and the UNDP carried out a policy dialogue around aid coordination, harmonisation and alignment in a unique manner in Rwanda. This evaluation was not able to identify and analyze in depth the reasons for the success of Rwanda in a country recovering from a conflict setting, but the UNDP might consider probing into this in more detail. The ACU must be rated highly satisfactory in the manner in which it articulated and carried out its objectives of aid coordination, and was right in how it was carried out, notwithstanding the challenge of building capacity in the EFU. The Rwanda case is unique and the aid coordination mechanism worked primarily due to Government ownership and leadership, the transparency and honesty among donors and partners, the low levels of corruption which translated to a results orientation of the Government of Rwanda in its truest sense, and the agreement of both donors and partners to carry out critical functions when requested.

3.10 Strengths of the Project

All stakeholders interviewed provided positive feedback on the strengths of the ACU. On staffing they stated that the staff were competent, young, dynamic and energetic. As a team, they were always responsive to both government and partners and above all neutral. Some donors felt

that the ACU could have been given a broader mandate since they had the capacity to deliver. The team worked consistently beyond its Terms of Reference. The EFU and the ACU were visualized as one cohesive unit; most donors did not know if they were different entities. The ACU received strong support from the Steering Committee throughout its functioning.

Programmatically, the project was able to set in place a forum for one of the most dynamic examples of aid harmonisation and alignment in a country recovering from conflict, while engaging in a policy dialogue with an organizational focus. Several donors felt that the strengths of the ACU were reflected in the manner in which they handled all aspects of DPCG and DPM meetings, functioning as a Secretariat for the DPG, and in building capacity among MINECOFIN and EFU staff in a meaningful way. Several donors stated that the ACU, the GoR and the DPG worked together to formulate and set in place a remarkable aid coordination mechanism in a country recovering from conflict in a short period of time, not usually seen in Africa, and must be recommended to other countries that did not have a such a mechanism in place. The formulation and introduction of operational aid coordination tools like the Rwanda Aid Policy, and the Development Assistance Database were considered unique and valuable tools to aid mechanisms and management in Africa.

3.11 Weaknesses of the Project

Some donors felt that the demands on the ACU staff were very high and they were too helpful at times to carry out tasks that ministry officials must learn to do. Others felt that the Government and the ACU need to exercise some selectivity in functioning for other more important international agendas. Rwanda is a pilot in several areas and this comes at a huge transaction cost to the Government and to the ACU and EFU. There is some confusion in the minds of donors as to whether the roles of the ACU and EFU were one, and who the ACU is accountable to—donors or the GoR. In reality, they stated it is to both. There were some diverse views on the dependency of GOR to the ACU.

Some also felt that problems of staff capacity and sustainability of the EFU should not be blamed on the ACU, and was an area that needed additional work in coordinating aid in Rwanda as a whole. Others felt that operationally, the tasks currently undertaken by project staff could not be sustained under the UN and must be tasked by the Government in its entirety. There were diverse views on the role of the UN and its comparative advantage. Some donors and stakeholders felt that the UN was not the right organization to handle issues of coordination of aid. A few felt that there was a need to differentiate between the UN's role as a deliverer of aid, its mandate and role in providing TA, and in brokering policy dialogue. Others felt that the launch of the One UN Reform would help iron out some of the inefficiencies in the system and support greater harmonisation efforts in the country.

Several donors raised the issue of the lack of capacity in the sectors and clusters, and the need for the ACU to have played a stronger role in this context. All donors and stakeholders consulted agreed that sustainability of the ACU and the EFU was questionable. Some stated that the UN should have built in a framework to ensure sustainability and handing over in a more coherent and efficient manner at the commencement of the project, and articulated a less ambitious terms of reference for implementation.

Several donors stated that there were inconsistencies in the monitoring and tracking of aid flows by the DAD and these needed to be monitored more strategically. Some donors felt that the ACU and the EFU should be funded from a clear budget allocation and not from a basket fund to help build sustainability; donor support to the ISP for aid coordination activities was the most appropriate modality to follow.

3.12 Capacity Issues and Constraints

The UNDP project summary document very clearly speaks to the successful implementation and oversight of harmonisation and coordination initiatives, and the contribution to medium term capacity building related to improving delivery and effectiveness of aid. The ACU was able to contribute to improving the donor government interface in a meaningful manner with the in-depth sustained policy dialogue it was able to provide to the Government and the establishment of the DPG framework. It also provided technical expertise to issues of harmonisation and alignment in an ongoing manner. Information flows were handled with both internal and external communication measures and linkages set up through the use of websites and documentation on aid coordination in Rwanda. Despite plans to build capacity in lead ministries to take leadership roles in coordination, this was not possible due to lack of technical expertise in the sectors and clusters, and greater attention being given to handling agenda, drafting and implementation of DPCG, and DPR, and DPM meetings throughout the year.

Awareness raising and sensitization to aid coordination issues were planned coherently with the launch of the Rwanda Aid Policy. Despite plans to hand over the functions to the EFU in the second year of the project, donors mentioned that every time the discussion came up at the Steering Committee, EFU staff were in the process of leaving the unit, and capacity issues of the unit surfaced, thereby revealing that the risks mentioned in the initiation document were real. Capacity constraints at the ministerial level continued to plague the Government across sectors and clusters, in addition to that of the EFU, thereby revealing the continuing challenge of building capacity in a country recovering from conflict in a short period of time.

3.13 Lessons Learned

- Changing modalities of aid, as well as a move towards more country ownership and management of assistance, which entails harmonised approaches and pooling of funds under different types of arrangements, places new challenges upon Governments and donors alike. Effective aid coordination involves a process that guides the recipient country and donors toward an agreement that all partners will accept mutual responsibility for achieving development outcomes, as well as distinct accountabilities. The project facilitated a policy dialogue around aid coordination, harmonisation and alignment in a unique manner in Rwanda, and was able to set in place a sustainable forum among development partners on aid. This evaluation was not able to identify and analyze the reasons for the success of Rwanda in a country recovering from conflict in depth, but the UNDP might consider probing into this in more detail. The ACU must be rated highly satisfactory for the manner in which it articulated and carried out its objectives of aid coordination, and was right in how it was carried out, notwithstanding the challenge of building capacity in the EFU. The Rwanda case is unique and the aid coordination

mechanism worked primarily due to four reasons: Government ownership and leadership, the transparency and honesty among donors and partners, the low levels of corruption which translated to a results orientation of the Government of Rwanda in its truest sense, and the agreement of both donors and partners (including the UN and the ACU in particular) to carry out critical functions when requested.

- The Project attempted to cover too much ground in the areas of capacity building and knowledge transfer with limited staff and time. The training programs that were identified for EFU staff were appropriate but staff turnover limited the impact of training, something that could not have been foreseen by the ACU or the Government at that time. Furthermore, a more coherent framework for handing over the ACU's functions to the EFU should have been articulated in the program document at inception.
- The Project and the ACU has been enormously successful in assisting the Government to analyze its past aid and current aid flows, and in formulating a Rwanda Aid Policy that helps to define a framework for delivery of aid. However, donors raised several questions about its sustainability, given the current staffing profile of the EFU.
- The ACU failed to recognize the unique opportunity and importance of the coordination and harmonisation of clusters and sectors. It will need to work in close collaboration with the Ministries to set in place a framework and/or help learn from those sectors that are further ahead like Health and Education, given the importance of coordination at this level with the launch of the EDPRS.
- Formulating an Aid Policy is only one step; implementation of the Rwanda Aid Policy in a coherent and meaningful manner continues to present challenges for the ACU and MINECOFIN. Despite sensitization and orientation workshops of stakeholders, several aspects of the Aid Policy remain an articulation on paper. Participation of line ministries, ongoing engagement of all development partners, and enhanced policy dialogue with a good understanding of the aid policy framework by all stakeholders is key to effective implementation of the Policy.

3.14 Other Examples in Africa

Aid coordination and harmonisation frameworks are being implemented in several parts of Africa, with the most progress made in Uganda, Ghana and Tanzania. The ACU and the EFU might consider looking at the frameworks being used by these countries. In all three cases, coordination frameworks and processes in the sector working groups is further ahead than that in Rwanda. In the case of Uganda, there are currently 30 Sector Working Groups, and these are set up under functional or cross sectoral and advisory areas. Joint Sector Reviews carried out by these groups are shared with the Budget Committee every year. In the case of Ghana, all Sector Working Groups have a Terms of Reference for the Chair and the Co-Chair. The Chair and the Co-Chair rotate after a period of time. Mandates and Terms of Reference for these working groups are revisited periodically. A closer look at their processes and mandates would help to provide lessons in the Rwandan context.

Chapter 4: Recommendations

- This evaluation recommends that the Steering Committee and MINECOFIN reconsider the provision of support to the GOR under revised terms, in the context of inadequate capacity of the EFU to handle the aid coordination function, and if necessary expand the basket fund of donors and discuss with the DPG a framework for providing continued support and assistance to the EFU in 2008.
- The project must revisit the issue of capacity and technical skill building in the EFU with greater coherence, and work to build capacity over the next 12-18 months in a sustainable way, so that the project can work towards handing over the function realistically. Issues of staffing should be discussed with a wider group of donors and the Government, and efforts should be made to consider a more viable solution to make the unit technically sound.
- The project and the DPCG must consider processes and means to support , strengthen and update its portfolio of aid coordination and harmonisation in the sector units, and gear up to share information with stakeholders on these mechanisms in a systematic and timely manner. This will have to be thought through in the context of providing technical assistance to the sector working groups by the donor group as a whole. The launch of the EDPRS forces donors and government to align their efforts to the pillars that have been identified and will make the sensitization to coordination of aid even more critical in line ministries and sectors.
- The project should draw up a framework recommending that the basket fund group of donors or the DPG support good analytical work on NGOs and CSOs in Rwanda, including a directory of their organizations, activity, and funding sources for inclusion in the DAD. Preliminary discussions to carry out this type of analytical work has been raised at different fora; however, work in this regard is particularly important with the evolving aid architecture and the launch of the EDPRS given the wider group of stakeholders.
- The aid coordination framework in Rwanda is unique; this evaluation was not able to identify in depth or detail the reasons as to why the UN was able to achieve the results and build the policy dialogue in this unique setting. It does, however, recommend that the UN consider writing this as good practice so that others might learn from the experience. The UN might also consider learning from the other aid coordination mechanisms led by the UN that have been tried in other member countries in order to learn about sustainable mechanisms for handing over critical functions of this kind that require unique technical skills.
- The project in collaboration with the GoR must revisit the mandate of the EFU in the context of an evolving aid architecture in Rwanda. The Results Framework initially articulated by the project should be updated and revisited to make it more current and relevant to the project and the needs of the GOR today.

ANNEXES

Annex A: EDPRS Cluster and Sector Working Groups

Annex B: List of Interviewees

Annex C: Donor/Stakeholder Questions

Annex D: ACU/EFU Questions

Annex E: Results Framework

Annex A: EDPRS Cluster and Sector Working Groups

November 2007: An Overview

Theme / Sector Working Group	Corresponding Cluster(s)	Lead Government Institution (Chair)	Remarks
1.1 Economic Growth & Financial Sector Development	None	MINECOFIN	<p>Information on the <u>Private Sector Development Cluster</u> provided on the DPG site, however though it mentions minutes none are posted. It does provide COMESA documents and other related documents last posted in February 2007 but the documents are older.</p> <p>The website's search engine provides a link to the Development Partners Website.</p> <p><u>Energy Sector Working Group</u> set up some presentations available on Google. Not collated on any website</p>
1.2 Private Sector Development	Private sector development cluster	MINICOM	
1.3 Infrastructure:	Infrastructure cluster	MININFRA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy • Transport • ICT • Habitat and urbanization 		MIFOTRA	
1.4 Employment Promotion & Capacity Building			
2.1 Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	Rural Economic Development Cluster	MINAGRI	<u>Rural Development Cluster</u> information provided on DPG website. TOR and Minutes and documentation last posted in March, 2007
2.2 Environment and Land Use Management		MINITERE	Sector Working on <u>Environment</u> has been set up. Meetings have been held however no documentation is available on the website.
3.1 Education, Research & Development	Education development partners cluster group	MINEDUC	<p>Education Sector Working Group information provided on the DPG website last posted February, 2007.</p> <p>The information on the <u>Health Cluster</u> Group is mentioned on the Ministry website with a link to the DPG site. Minutes are up to date and last posted on November, 2007.</p> <p>The <u>HIV/AIDS</u> sub cluster is also listed on the DPG site, and this site provides the evaluation of aid coordination in the HIV/AIDS sub cluster and minutes were last posted in February, 2007.</p>
3.2 Health, Nutrition, Population & HIV/AIDS	Health sector cluster group	MINISANTE	
3.3 Water & Sanitation	Water cluster	MINITERE	

Theme / Sector Working Group	Corresponding Cluster(s)	Lead Government Institution (Chair)	Remarks
3.4 Social Protection	group None	MINALOC	Website under construction
3.5 Science, Technology & Innovation	None	MINISTR	
3.6 Youth, Culture & Sports		MIJESPOC	
4.1 Justice, Reconciliation, Law & Order	Justice sector coordination group	MINIJUST	Sector Working Group on <u>Justice</u> has been set up, meetings have been held, however no documentation
4.2 Security	None	MINADEF	
4.3 Decentralization, Citizen Participation, Empowerment, Transparency & Accountability	Decentralization cluster	MINALOC	
Environment, Gender, HIV/AIDS, Social Inclusion, Youth	None	MINECOFIN	DPG site provides information on the <u>Gender Cluster</u> with documents last posted in February, 2007.

Note: * Districts, Civil Society, Private Sector, Parliament, Premature and MINECOFIN are represented in every Sector Working Group.

Annex B: List of Interviewees

Name	Title	Institution
Robin Ogilvy	Head of Aid Coordination Unit (Project Manager)	ACU, UNRCO
Christian Shingiro	Acting.Director/External Finance Unit	Seconded from ACU, UNRCO
Dirk Druet	JPC, Aid Coordination Unit	ACU, UNRCO
Dereck Rusagara	DAD Manager /ACU	ACU, UNRCO
Dirk Brems	Cooperation Attaché	Belgium Embassy
Francoise Donnay	Attaché de Cooperation	Belgium Embassy
Annamaria Scotti	Head of office/Head of Cooperation	CIDA
Alex Carrasco	Second Secretary for Development	CIDA
Edouard Munyamaliza	Development Officer	CIDA
Sandra Pepera	Head DFID Rwanda /Burundi	DFID
Jan Bade	First Secretary /Economic Development	Netherlands Embassy
Matthias Weingart	Country Director	SDC/Swiss Embassy
Arne Strom	Head of Development Cooperation	SIDA
John Rwangombwa	Secretary General & Secretary to the Treasury	MINECOFIN
George Katureebe	Director General	CEPEX
Alexis Bisanukuli	Country Director (Chair, INGO Network)	Voluntary Service Overseas
Christophe Tocco	Director, Program Office	USAID
Carl Seagrave	Deputy Program Officer	USAID
Regan Whitworth	Senior Technical Advisor	USAID
Victoria Kwakwa	Country Manager	World Bank
Vincent de Boer	Economist	European Commission
Jean Paul Rwabuyonza	Head of Strategic Planning and Economic Management Unit	UNDP-Rwanda
Lindsey Mackinnon	Governance and M&E Consultant	UNDP- Rwanda
Agnes Kalibata	Permanent Secretary	MINAGRI
Moustapha Soumare	Resident Coordinator –Co-chair DPCG	UNRCO
Eugene Rwibasira	Chairman of the Board	Organization of Rwanda Local NGO's
Michel Sebera	Bilateral Cooperation Officer	EFU
Alex Karangwa	Multilateral Cooperation Officer	EFU
Rose Goslinga	ODI Fellow	MINAGRI

Annex C: Donor/Stakeholder Questions

1. How do you visualize the role of your government as a partner in aid coordination in Rwanda?
2. How do you visualize the role of the ACU/Harmonisation project in aid coordination in Rwanda?
3. In your opinion has the ACU helped/hindered the aid coordination process in Rwanda? Has it been effective in Rwanda?
4. How relevant is the ACU/project in Rwanda?
5. Do you have any thoughts on the role of the UN in aid coordination in Rwanda and in leading the ACU? Do you think the UN was the right donor to carry out the function of aid coordination in supporting the GOR?
6. Has the ACU project been handled in an efficient manner by the UN?
7. Have you been involved in the Cluster Working Groups, what is the extent of harmonisation in these groups? Is the mandate of these groups clear?
8. What in your opinion are three strengths of the ACU project?
9. What in your opinion are three weaknesses of the ACU project?
10. What in your opinion are three lessons that you would keep in mind for future projects?
11. How sustainable is the ACU project model now that it is being handed over to the Government?
12. How sustainable is the ACU in terms of institutional capacity, human resource capacity and funding capacity?
13. Is there anything you would like to recommend for the functioning of the ACU in future to make it more effective?
14. What is the future of aid coordination in Rwanda in the context of the ACU?

Annex D: ACU/EFU Questions

1. What is your role in the ACU?
2. How relevant is the ACU in Rwanda?
3. Has the ACU project been handled in an efficient manner?
4. Do you think the EFU is ready to handle the project? Who will handle your work in the EFU when it is handed over?
5. What in your opinion are three strengths of the ACU?
6. What in your opinion are three weaknesses of the ACU?
7. What are the three lessons learned?
8. How sustainable is the ACU in terms of human resource, institutional and financial capacity?
9. Is there anything you would like to recommend for the functioning of the ACU in future to make it more effective?
10. What is the future of aid coordination in Rwanda?

Annex E: Results Framework (At project inception, 2005)

Development Objective: Improvement in the effect and impact of development assistance in Rwanda, in support of the national priorities of poverty reduction, and the international commitment to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.						
Outcome	Outputs	Activities	Tasks	Partnership	Timeframe	External constraints & risks
1. Government of Rwanda leading aid coordination, harmonization & alignment process in Rwanda under a clear framework to support PRS implementation <u>Outcome Indicator: By the end of the project, the functions and responsibilities have been taken over by the GoR</u>	1.1 Clear Framework for aid coordination established and implemented	1.1.1 Policy and technical support to development and Adoption of a National Framework on Aid Coordination and Harmonization in Rwanda	High level dialogue between government and donor agencies - both at field and HQ level - to reach shared consensus on problems for aid coordination and the way head	Government of Rwanda; Development Partners	After 2004 DPM	Need for Government Leadership
		1.1.2 Joint funding mechanism to support aid coordination established enjoying the support of government and a group of several donors.	Establish Joint Funding mechanism and associated supervisory processes	CIDA, SDC, Netherlands, DFID, GoR	Ongoing	Donors fail to give sufficient funding.
		1.1.3 Awareness raising for government and donors issues of aid coordination and harmonization leading to better implementation of these activities in Rwanda	Best Practice/Lessons Learned	Government of Rwanda, Development Partners; International Organizations (OECD/DAC, MDBs); Other African countries	2004-7	Need for Government Leadership
	1.2 Functioning consultative mechanisms to improve alignment of development assistance behind government priorities	1.2.1 Annual Development Partners Meeting	Support to preparation and execution of DPM	Government of Rwanda, Development Partners	Annual	The meeting has not always been held on an annual basis

		1.2.2 Regular Development Partners Coordination Group meetings, of a high standard, composed of both government and donor representatives of the appropriate level	Support to preparation and execution of DPCG including follow up	MINECOFIN (Coordination Unit)	Monthly - ongoing	
		1.2.3 Clarification and support to an active and functioning cluster system for government/donor consultation including support to a sector wide approach	Clarification of framework for clusters in conjunction with government. May include ToR, Annual Workplans, Government and Development Partner Leads, reporting and organizational structures, etc.	MINECOFIN (Coordination Unit); Relevant Ministries; Development Partners	2004	
		1.2.4 Capacity Building for Government of Rwanda	Capacity building to ensure that the Secretariat can be transferred to government; Capacity building to ensure that lead Ministries can fully take on their roles in facilitating coordination	Government of Rwanda; training institutions; other African and international governments with best practices to share; OECD/DAC; SPA	2005 - 6	
		1.2.5 Integration of civil society into the discourse on harmonization, alignment and coordination in order to improve aid delivery	Links and working modality established between the DPCG and coordination groups for civil society in Rwanda.	INGOs, NGOs, CBOs and CSOs active in Rwanda	2005-7	May lie outside the projects' capacity as envisaged
	1.3 Demonstrated reduction in transaction costs to GoR	1.3.1 Review government and donor practices in pilots sectors	Support to pilot Joint Review of effectiveness of donor support to MinEcoFin	MinEcoFin, DFID, World Bank, IMF, Cooperation Belges, EU	2004	
			Support to Joint Review of Education Sector	MinEcoFin, DFID	2004	
			Dissemination of key findings for harmonization to other Ministries and Departments	MinEcoFin, MinEduc, Development Partners	2005	

			Integration of findings into HLF case study	MinEcoFin, MinEduc, Development Partners, OECD/DAC	2005	
		1.3.2 Support to Coordination, Harmonization of Programmes and Projects	Development of MoU and Associated Documents for the Project and Programme Donors in place	Government of Rwanda, Development Partners	2004-5	
			Support to execution of coordination, harmonization & alignment activities resulting from this framework.	Government of Rwanda, Development Partners	2004 - 7	
		1.3.3 Strengthening of the Budget Support Framework	Support to the Budget Support Framework, as required	Government of Rwanda; Budget Support Signatories	2004-7	Government Input and Responsiveness on Cluster System
2. Improved Government Capacity for effective aid management <u>Outcome Indicator:</u> Government proposed coordination structures are functioning as envisaged and intended by the GoR	2.1 Improvement in the availability, quality, and organization of information on aid and donor activity in Rwanda leading to improved integration of aid flows into explicit national development goals and strategies, and into the national budgetary process.	2.1.1 Establishment for agreed monitoring framework for aid effectiveness	Establish set of indicators and agree upon amongst donors	MinEcoFin, DFID, World Bank	2004 - 5 (As part of PRSCII)	Funds
			Establish monitoring process	MinEcoFin, DFID	2005 (As part of PRSCII)	Government Agreement; Funds
			Collect and analyze information	MinEcoFin, DFID	2005 - 7	Continued buy in from Budget Support Donors
		2.1.2 Increased government capacity to monitor aid effectiveness		DFID		

	2.2 Established information tools to document & monitor donor activity and development assistance in Rwanda	2.2.1 User friendly and clear, government owned website established ensuring transparency and accessibility of information on donor and government activities	Establishment of website. Upkeep of website. Training on website maintenance as required.	MINECOFIN (Coordination Unit)	2004	Support of Government; Funding
		2.2.2 Expansion of Site to become central donor coordination online resource	Further technical development of website	MINECOFIN	2005-7	Support of Government; Funding
	2.3 Integration of Rwanda into Global Fora on Aid Harmonization & Alignment to ensure that Rwanda is at the forefront of international best practice	2.3.1 Development of a case study for the 2005 Paris High Level Forum	Define scope of case study, ToR in consultation with DPCG, Hire consultant, Monitor Process, Review Case Study, Submit to and present at HLF 2005	MinEcoFin, Development Partners, OECD/DAC, WB	August 2004 - February 2005	Funding, capacity HR in secretariat
		2.3.2 Follow up to HLF - Positioning of Rwanda as a key partner country in this process	To be determined as an outcome of the HLF	MinEcoFin, Development Partners, OECD/DAC, WB	February 2005 - 2007	Funding, support
		2.3.3 Updating of recognized information sharing for a such as www.aidharmonization.org and www.jointanalyticwork.net to ensure that Rwanda best practice and lessons learned are shared	Updating of information	GoR, development partners in Rwanda and at HQ such as the OECD/DAC	ongoing	Human capacity in secretariat

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1 OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the assignment is to evaluate and assess the project against targets as set in the project document and annual work plans since 2005. Moreover, it is intended for this consultancy to provide stakeholders with lessons learned and concrete recommendations for future aid effectiveness initiatives in Rwanda.

2 BACKGROUND

In order to address the capacity needs and to ensure that aid coordination mechanisms have the support necessary to function effectively, the Government of Rwanda requested that an Aid Coordination Unit be established within the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator. The project for Supporting Aid Harmonization, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda was thus set up to cover the period from 2005-2007 with the Aid Coordination Unit established in 2005 to implement this project. The Unit relocated to the External Finance Unit of Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in October 2006. The project aims to support the development of a common national vision for aid effectiveness in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and other international agreements while working towards the alignment of development assistance around the Poverty Reduction Strategy and Millennium Development Goals. The project also aims to support the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for aid effectiveness in Rwanda.

The following outcomes are targeted in the project's activities and outputs:

1. Improved capacity of the government in the area of aid delivery and management;
2. A reduction of transaction costs for government -donor interactions resulting from
 - a. Efficiency savings from a reduction in duplicate activities;
 - b. Increased delivery rates and;
 - c. Rationalization of certain donor processes, where possible by aligning them behind the government systems;
3. Increased awareness amongst government and donors of potential efficiency gains and costs savings resulting from the implementation of a harmonization agenda.

The project aims to support the development of a common national vision for aid effectiveness in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and other international agreements while working towards the alignment of development assistance around the Poverty Reduction Strategy and Millennium Development Goals. The project also aims to support the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for aid effectiveness in Rwanda.

The project for Supporting Aid Harmonization, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda is a Direct Execution Project (DEX). This implies that UNDP takes the role of executing agent of the project and holds the overall responsibility for the formulation and management of the project in consultation with members of the steering committee.

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agent of the project and holds the overall responsibility for the formulation and management of the project in consultation with members of the steering committee.

As the project for Supporting Aid Harmonization, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda is innovative, an evaluation of the project will provide all stakeholders with an excellent opportunity on lessons learned and for the recommendations, both, for future activities in Rwanda and as inputs into global practice.

Hence the services of a highly qualified team of consultants to conduct the evaluation of the Project are required.

3 SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 The Steering Committee for the project for Supporting Aid Harmonisation, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda shall guide and oversee the overall direction of the consultancy. The Steering Committee is composed of the External Finance Unit of the Ministry Finance and Economic Planning, the Aid Coordination Unit and six bilateral donors to the basket fund. The consultants will report directly to the Director of the External Finance Unit of MINECOFIN.

3.2 Overall Methodology

- 3.2.1 Become familiar with bilateral and multilateral partners, and Government requirements for Project Evaluations;
- 3.2.2 Gather primary data from interviews with key stakeholders (UNRCO, Representatives of Government of Rwanda, International and National representatives from civil society, multilateral and bilateral donor agencies and others) using a structured methodology;
- 3.2.3 Gather secondary data from review of all the relevant documents including, Project Documents, Documents produced by the Aid Coordination and External Finance, Government of Rwanda, UN system, Paris Declaration, Monterrey Consensus and other relevant documents .
- 3.2.4 Produce and outline proposal for the report;
- 3.2.5 Present the draft report and its findings in a debriefing with the key stakeholders;
- 3.2.6 Produce and advanced draft report;
- 3.2.7 Finalise the report;
- 3.2.8 Translate the report.

3.3 Specifically, the consultant will:

- 3.3.1 Project Objectives:
 - a) Evaluate progress towards achieving the overall outputs and outcomes of the project for Supporting Aid Harmonization, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda;
 - b) Evaluate the effectiveness of activities used in the implementation of this project;
 - c) Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the project in responding to beneficiaries' needs;
 - d) Identify other initiatives aimed at improving aid harmonization and alignment across the Government of Rwanda with a view to identify how the ACU project is situated within these;

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3.3.2 Project Management

- a) Evaluate the extent to which the management and accountability structures of the project are appropriate in ensuring that it fulfills its stated objectives;

3.3.3 Capacity Development

- a) Identify areas in which the project had an impact on the strengthening of human and institutional capacities as well as government ownership;
- b) Highlight key capacity gaps remaining, as they apply to the objectives of the project

3.3.4 Way forward

- a) Identify the extent to which there remains a need for external support to harmonization and alignment;
- b) Where needs are identified, provide concrete recommendations for the provision of future support to harmonization and alignment in Rwanda giving consideration to strengths and weaknesses of the current project;
- c) Identify and document examples of best practice in the provision of support to harmonization and alignment with a view to informing the development of similar interventions in Rwanda and abroad;
- d) Provide recommendations with a view to ensuring the sustainable phasing out of the project.

3.3.5 Assess the impact of the project on gender (i.e. impact on both women and men).

3.4 Relevant literature and documentation for reference:

All relevant documentation and literature will be given to the consultant in soft copy once the evaluation begins, including:

3.4.1 Project Documents

- a) The Project Document for Supporting Aid Harmonisation, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda;
- b) Progress Reports submitted to the Steering Committee since 2005;
- c) Presentation given to Steering Committee;
- d) The proposal for integrating the project for Supporting Aid Harmonization, Alignment and Coordination in Rwanda with the Integrated Support to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

3.4.2 Documents produced by the Aid Coordination and External Finance Units

- a) Aid Effectiveness Reports
- b) DAD data quality reports and other relevant documentation
- c) Newsletters
- d) Aid Policy – Aid Policy Implementation Plan – Donors Joint Statement
- e) The 2005 Baseline Survey for Donor Alignment and Harmonization in Rwanda
- f) The 2006 Baseline Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration in Rwanda
- g) Annual DP Meeting Reports

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- h) Development Partners Coordination Group Related document (Reports, Minutes, Deliverables)
- i) Other workshop, meeting, consultation reports
- 3.4.3 Government of Rwanda
 - a) PRSP – EDPRS
 - b) Aid Effectiveness chapter of the EDPRS
 - c) Vision 2020
- 3.4.4 UN System:
 - a) UNDAF 2008-2012
 - b) UNDP Country Program 2008-2012
 - c) One UN Concept Note
 - d) Aid Effectiveness related chapters of the 2007 Rwanda National Human Development Report
- 3.4.5 International
 - a) Rome and Paris Declarations
 - b) Monterrey Consensus
 - c) OECD/DAC Harmonizing Donor Practices
 - d) Other relevant documents

4	DELIVERABLES
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4.1 During the Assignment, the Consultant will deliver:

- 4.1.1 An outline proposal for the External Finance Unit before the report of the evaluation is drafted;
- 4.1.2 A draft report which contains the results of the evaluation of the project incorporating the objective and the scope of work;
- 4.1.3 Present and discuss the draft report its findings and recommendations in a debriefing with key stakeholders such as the Representatives of the Government of Rwanda, the Aid Coordination Unit, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office and the Steering Committee;
- 4.1.4 An advanced report incorporating the feedback from the debriefing session (to be prepared in Kigali);
- 4.1.5 Final Report with translation in French or English upon approval all concerned parties (finalised out-of-country)

4.2 Reporting Format

- 4.2.1 The report is to be drafted in English or French, where the draft report is provided in French, this shall be accompanied by an executive summary in English;
- 4.2.2 Report shall be written in a manner that makes it accessible to key stakeholders in Rwanda's development such as the Representatives from the Government of Rwanda, the UNRCO and UNDP; in-and-out-of-country representatives from multilateral and bilateral donor agencies, international and national representatives from the civil society;
- 4.2.3 The final Report shall be translated into French or English once it is approved by all concerned parties.

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5 QUALIFICATIONS

5.1 Submissions are invited from Firms with a Lead consultant (international or national) and one Rwandan national consultant. Candidates must demonstrate the following qualifications and experience:

5.2 Lead Consultant

- 5.2.1 An advanced degree in Economics, International development, Public policy, or other related field;
- 5.2.2 Minimum five experience in the field of poverty reduction strategies, aid-effectiveness and familiarity with Rwanda’s development context;
- 5.2.3 Minimum five years of experience in project formulation, conducting project evaluations and/or assessments of a similar nature and magnitude;
- 5.2.4 Work experience of minimum 7 years with international organizations and donors;
- 5.2.5 Fluency in English or French with a working knowledge of the other;

5.3 National consultant

- 5.3.1 University degree in Economics, International development, Public policy, or other related field;
- 5.3.2 Demonstrated work experience of three years (3) with public finance in developing countries,
- 5.3.3 Minimum three years of experience of project formulation and evaluation;
- 5.3.4 Fluency in English or French with working knowledge of the other. Knowledge of Kinyarwanda is an added advantage.

6 REMUNERATION AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The successful consultants will start their assignment as soon as possible following the completion of the recruitment process.

6.1 Submissions will be accepted from Firms and individuals.

6.2 The Successful Result of this Process will be a Contract for Professional Services;

- 6.2.1 Requiring an in-country presence and dedicated during the evaluation and preparation of the draft report;
- 6.2.2 Defining an overall period of **twenty five (25) working days** **starting in October 2007**. The exact work-plan is to be agreed at the beginning of the evaluation, an indicative timeframe for the assignment is provided as below:

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- a) Four (4) working days - Briefings with the External Finance and Aid Coordination Units held and review of the core project related documents completed. Strategy to conduct the evaluation prepared and approved by the External Finance and Aid Coordination Units;
 - b) Four (4) working days – Gathering primary data documented through individual meetings with the Steering Committee members and other relevant stakeholders;
 - c) Five (5) working days – Gathering secondary data by reviewing all relevant documentation;
 - d) Three (3) working days – Prepare an outline proposal, including an annotated table of contents of the report, with approval from the External Finance and Aid Coordination Units;
 - e) Three (3) working day - Draft evaluation report;
 - f) One (1) working day – Presentation of draft evaluation report, key findings, and recommendations at the debriefing session;
 - g) Two (2) working days – Finalize the advanced Draft Evaluation Report with comments received;
 - h) Three (3) working days – Final report submitted (this stage can be conducted out-of-country);
 - i) Translation of the report (which must be of a standard acceptable to government and donor agencies) shall be submitted to the External Finance and Aid Coordination Units no later than two weeks following the approval of the final report.
- 6.2.3 Milestone payment:
- a) Mobilisation;
 - b) Work-plan and outline proposal;
 - c) Draft Report;
 - d) Final Report in acceptable standard format;
 - e) Translation of the Final Report.
- 6.3 Only for information, interested parties should be aware that:**
- 6.3.1 The current UN Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for short-term assignments in Kigali is USD 168.00 per day (DSA component is only applicable for international consultants);

7 SUBMISSIONS

- 7.1 Qualified firms or individuals with experience in the field of aid-coordination are invited to submit:**
- 7.1.1 A written proposal (maximum 15 pages) is requested that provides details of the proposed approach and methodology. The proposal should also indicate details of similar assignments performed earlier, preferably in Sub-Saharan Africa and the level of effort made to the assignment.
 - 7.1.2 CV of the Lead Consultants and of the national consultant along with required documents;
 - 7.1.3 Other information which demonstrates your qualifications for this specific assignment;

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- 7.1.4 The Lump-Sum Fee which you propose for the consultancy. This Fee should be inclusive of ALL considerations. Please see ANNEX IV and ANNEX V of this RFP.
- 7.2 **The Submissions should be made in two separate envelopes or attachments (if submitted via email) for Technical Offer and Financial Offer (Indicating; DO NOT OPEN IN ADVANCE). Offers that are not submitted separately will be deemed as disqualified and will not be assessed further.**
- 7.3 Please note that Submissions by E- mail WILL BE ACCEPTED (see ANNEX I)

8	SELECTION PROCESS
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- 8.1 Submissions will be evaluated in consideration of the following Evaluation Criteria
- 8.1.1 Evaluation Criteria
- a) Expertise of the firm/organisation [15 points]
 - b) Previous experience in project evaluations [15 points];
 - c) Approach and methodology [10 points];
 - d) Qualifications of International Consultant [30 points];
 - e) Qualifications of the national consultant [30 points];
- 8.1.2 In order to qualify for further consideration the Individual Consultant must accomplish a minimum score of 70 points.
- 8.2 **The Basis of Award will be to the Individual Consultant who qualifies for further consideration and propose the lowest total Lump-Sum Fee.**
- 8.3 **This Opportunity is open to male and female candidates. Applications from qualified female candidates are encouraged.**