

Capacity Development for Aid Management and Coordination Project: Project Review.

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March 2011.

1. INTRODUCTION.

The Capacity Building for Aid Management and Coordination project document was signed in July 2006 between the Ministry of International Cooperation, UNDP and the European Union Delegation. It built on preparatory work done over the previous 12 months to normalise Sudan's relationship with international donors, which had been ruptured in 1990 (when Sudan ceased to receive EDF funding under the ACP agreement) but improved during the lead-up to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005.

The project was in effect part of a twin-track strategy by donors at the time: on the one hand, to focus assistance through parallel vehicles such as the Multi-Donor Trust Funds, which had separate oversight mechanisms; and on the other, to build up the capacity of Government structures, especially the Ministry of International Cooperation, to play a lead role in coordinating international aid. MIC has been supported since 2006 not only by the CDAMC project, but also by the Capacity Building for the Sudanese Administration project, also funded by the European Union.

The initial signed project was for 29 months, from July 2006 to December 2008. However, progress was slow and the project was substantially underspent in its early years. It has so far been extended three times: calendar 2009, calendar 2010, and calendar 2011.

Project implementation is best divided into two distinct phases:

- 1) 2005-2006. The project was conceived with great optimism as a part of a process of the "normalisation" of aid architecture in Sudan, whereby Government-donor relations would improve, conflict would recede, aid flows would increase and would increasingly use Government channels, public financial management systems would improve and Sudan would become an active member of the Paris process on aid effectiveness (which it formally joined in 2006). The project was to lay the groundwork of an aid information system on which it hoped later to build a serious structure of donor coordination and aid management by the Sudanese Government.
- 2) 2006 - present. Events did not conform to the expected pattern. Although the CPA survived, it was beset by multiple crises; conflict in South was replaced by conflict in the West and to some extent the East. The international media remained highly critical of the Government, and mutual suspicions between Government and donors were reinforced. Humanitarian aid retained primacy over development assistance. The JNTT lost impetus as the custodian of JAM. It also became clear (according to information received from the project manager for this period) that the Ministry of Finance did not favour closer cooperation with the MIC. The project continued with work on its first objective (building MIC capacity), because the conditions made the second objective (better aid management and coordination) virtually impossible. Activities under this second, more ambitious, objective were repeatedly delayed and pushed back (much as happened with the difficult issues of the CPA). By the time of this Review, only 10 months before the anticipated project close, it was still hoped that a set of consultancies would be able to make progress on this second objective (Aid Strategy, MDGs, PRSP and Aid Integration in Budget).

2) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project was conceived during the "honeymoon period" of the CPA, when major development assistance to Sudan was set to resume after a 15-year gap (1990-2005). Although

the project was well-aligned to Government priorities at this stage, the detailed project proposal lacked evidence of an analysis of the capacity gaps of the Ministry (5.2) and was based on a number of shaky assumptions (5.3). Because of this, the Review is structured not around the proposal's 6 outputs (although the results so far achieved against these outputs are summarised in the table at Annex 4), but around the 3 pillars of project activities: Capacity-Building; Aid Information Architecture; and Aid Policy Architecture (5.4).

The project assisted in the establishment of its counterpart unit in the Ministry of International cooperation (MIC), the Aid Management Coordination Unit (AMCU), and started a training programme that has so far covered 760 attendees at 39 training sessions and visits. A strategic decision was taken to focus on junior and middle-level staff, specifically to build their generic skills (6.1). Outside of AMCU, the project made efforts to strengthen the M&E Directorate, and to build a network of aid-information focal points across other Ministries and in the States. The desktop version of the Sudan Aid Information Database was started in 2006, and work began on the web version the following year (6.2). However, there were problems with getting an agreed basis of data for the database. In parallel, a website committee began working on the Ministry website. Work on Aid Policy Architecture, the third pillar of project activities, has been delayed until later in 2011 with important consultancies on Aid Strategy and Aid-on-budget (6.3).

The project has kept within most of its budget lines, and interviewees generally favoured keeping the Direct Execution (DEX) modality as opposed to moving to National Execution (NEX) (7.1).

Although training courses have undoubtedly raised skill levels, some staff report problems in applying their new skills in their day-to-day work (8.1). Planned consultancies later in 2011 on MIC Capacity Assessment and MIC Structural Reform are important opportunities to overcome the obstacles identified. State-level visits will be required in order to assess the impact of capacity-building efforts at state level. The database is not relied upon by donors because of disputes over its figures, and steps should be taken to correct this by means of outreach with donors, coordinated by UNDP in its role as an honest broker. Efforts should also be made to expand the content available on the Ministry website (8.2). The project has produced a number of rich papers on aid management processes at state and federal level, and these papers should be made more accessible, e.g. by being placed on the website (8.3).

In the early days, project staff spent too much time implementing project activities themselves, but they now work in more sustainable, advisory, roles (9.1). A steady focus on the Ministry's M&E capacity will be necessary in order to consolidate the new capacity here. The Ministry of Finance has budgeted to pick up many of the project's running costs after the end of the project (9.2). In parallel with its work on aid policy, the project should take opportunities to promote and strengthen what could be called "the political constituency for aid" (9.3).

The project has been negatively affected by three management problems: (i) a lack of consistency and continuity in the project manager role, (ii) delayed recruitment for key staff positions, and (iii) inadequate support from the UNDP country office (11.1). Further challenges have been the low level of trust between Government and donors, and the division of responsibility for aid between three separate Ministries (11.2).

3) OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

According to the Terms of Reference of the review, its main objectives are:

- i) To assess progress in achieving expected the expected results.
- ii) To make recommendations on the need for possible corrective measures

- iii) To make possible recommendations on the enhancement of MIC staff capacity.
- iv) To provide recommendations on the project extension and/or reformation; on managing the SAID and MIC website on a sustainable basis; and to assess the future of AMCU in terms of organisation, management, IT readiness, work planning and activity monitoring.

The full TOR is available at Annex 1.

4) METHODOLOGY

The most common framework¹ for assessing organisational capacity uses three aspects of capacity:

- 1) “Being”: internal structure, human resource management, work processes.
- 2) “Doing”: programme performance; the specific tasks of the organisation.
- 3) “Relating”: managing relationships, networking, protecting space.

Other more detailed frameworks have been developed², but this evaluation will use the three-point one for its clarity and ease of use. In terms of this framework, the bulk of project activities are focused on the second aspect: assisting the Ministry to perform certain of its aid-related functions. The project has not, for example, concentrated on structural support to the Ministry as a whole, although it has been instrumental in building up AMCU and the M&E General Directorate, and there are two consultancies planned on MIC structural reform and capacity assessment. The main focus of the project has been on equipping the Ministry to undertake its programmatic activities.

The methodology used to review the Project has been therefore based on:

- Review of project documentation including proposals, logframes, project records and reports
- Interviews with project staff
- Semi-structured interviews with MIC stakeholders in the project
- Focus group discussion with AMCU staff connected with the project
- Focus group discussion with other MIC staff trained by the project
- Semi-structured interviews with focal points in other Ministries
- Interviews with EU, UNDP and other donors and international agencies connected with the project or with other capacity-building efforts.

Preliminary findings were shared with a workshop held with project staff, MIC staff, other Government staff and donors; and feedback made at this workshop has been incorporated into this report. The Review was required to assess the project against the standard OECD DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. In this report, the main activities of the project in this report are assessed against these five criteria.

5) RELEVANCE

5.1) ALIGNMENT WITH COUNTRY PRIORITIES.

Sudan’s aid management structures changed considerably in the years before the project started. In 1994, what later became the Ministry of International Cooperation (MIC) was a Planning

¹ Lipson and Hunt: “Capacity-Building Guide: a values-based programming framework”, INTRAC, 2008.

² Most notably by EPRDF following a two-year study of capacity building efforts (“A Balanced Approach to Monitoring and Evaluating Capacity and Performance: a Proposal for a Framework”, ECDPM, 2007).

Agency within the Ministry of Finance and National Economy (MOFNE). In 1996 it had become the Ministry of International Cooperation and Investment, and in 1998 the Agency of International Development within MOFNE. Finally, under presidential decree no 12 of 2001, it was established as an independent federal ministry named the Ministry of International Cooperation.

After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the ministry was given a new mandate under presidential decree no 34 of 2005. But the new body faced a major lack of institutional memory, caused by the 15-year gap in most international funding mechanisms (since 1990). It was faced with severe shortages of technically-qualified staff, was working for ill-equipped premises, and had very limited access to computers and internet connectivity.

In this context, a project that was designed to build the technical capacity of staff, to equip them with the tools to do the job, and to engage them on a communications task of the first order (the construction of a national aid information system) made sound sense. There was much to do, as was confirmed retrospectively by the 2008 Paris Declaration Survey (which relied on data collected in 2007), only 23% of aid from each donor was accurately reflected in Sudan's national budget³. The same Survey reported SAID as a positive step that could be expected to inform national performance against this aspect of the aid effectiveness agenda.

5.2) DIAGNOSIS OF CAPACITY GAPS

However, there is no evidence from the project proposal that a serious analysis of the human resource needs of the Ministry was done as part of the project preparation. Instead, the proposal spent 6 pages and 4 diagrams reviewing the shortcoming of the existing aid information system (such as it was), and suggesting how a new and improved database could fit with existing information channels and the JAM framework. The detailed program activities reflected this bias: there were references to the implementation of training plans (under objective 1.1 and 1.2), but little reference made to previous assessments of MIC structural capacity and the fact that broad-based generic training would be required.

This was one of the major reasons why the project changed shape radically during its inception phase: the situation on the ground did not match the assumption that the human capacity already existed within the Ministry to roll out the enhanced aid information architecture. More emphasis would have to be put on lower level training.

5.3) DESIGN OF THE PROJECT

The Project Logframe will be assessed for its internal programme logic. For the purposes of this discussion, it is outlined here in simplified form (omitting activities and the less significant indicators and assumptions):

NARRATIVE SUMMARY	INDICATORS	RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS
Goal To ensure that official Development Assistance contributes effectively and efficiently to national reconstruction, poverty eradication and conflict prevention in the Sudan.		
Purpose To lay the foundation of a government-led and results-based aid management system that handles external humanitarian and development resources in a transparent and accountable manner in line with agreed national priorities.		

³ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/25/33/41952628.pdf>

Objective 1 BUILD THE GOVERNMENT-DONOR AID INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEM		
Output 1.1 National institutions run a comprehensive, transparent and coherent aid information and monitoring system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational chart with aid management functions and posts across all concerned government entities. Database is developed and running as per benchmarks of the business plan Information (financial and project data, reports etc.) meets partners expressed needs. Information is presented publicly on an online basis (website). Four training exercises have been undertaken for 25-30 government staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All partners collaborate to assign focal points, provide information and express their needs. Linkages rather than competition with existing systems established (NIC, OCHA-RTS, MoF Oracle, HAC/MHA).
Output 1.2 A well informed government-led consultative group structure exists to facilitate regular and transparent coordination and strategic decision-making among national and foreign aid partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint stakeholders aid coordination and consultation framework (thematic and working group structure) established under NG leadership Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the JAM Framework institutionalised within government structures (core and line ministries and JNTT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review supported by highest level of government and agreement on powerful planning and monitoring mechanism linked to the JNTT (assumes no delay in implementation of the CPA). Principle of government-led aid coordination structure approved and supported by all partners.
Objective 2 INTEGRATE AID PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING PROCESSES WITHIN A SOUND NATIONAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM		
Output 2.1 More projects are recorded ‘on-budget’ and some assistance goes “through-budget” to support national planning and budgetary processes Output 2.2: the MDG-based I-PRSP is developed and clearly articulated to the JAM Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of aid projects recorded on-budget Number of donor strategies aligned on national plans, and MDGs-based Poverty Reduction Strategies. Harmonization guidelines and recommendations (on project and reporting formats, procurement procedures, pooling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government authorities strengthen and clarify their national and local planning and financing methods. Government authorities are committed to adjust their planning and budgetary procedures to reflect aid inputs (federal and state levels). Good cooperation with IMF and WB on Public

<p>Output 2.3: Plan of Action developed by governmental and foreign aid partners to put into practice the principles of the Paris Declaration on aid-effectiveness.</p> <p>Output 2.4: The Government formulates a first aid policy that includes a regulatory and legal framework to guide and facilitate humanitarian and development partners' strategies and operation.</p>	<p>arrangements).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid policy drafted. 	<p>Financial Management (analytic work and reforms).</p>
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There are a number of comments to make on this logframe, which expose how the intervention logic was only partly relevant to the situation:

- 1) the absence of output-to-purpose risks and assumptions. They were missing in the original, but should have included such basic assumptions as a continued improvement in the level of trust between Government and donors; and the ability of the Ministry to position itself as the key gateway in donor/government relations.
- 2) The ambitious nature of the project. Following on from the first point, it is clear that the project made overly optimistic assumptions about:
 - a. The existing human resource capacity of the Ministry.
 - b. The ability of the ministry to establish itself as leader of a powerful “constituency for aid” within the Sudanese political system, competing against other dominant lobbies such as security and oil.
 - c. The level of trust between Government and donors.
- 3) The assumption that key elements of the Paris Aid Effectiveness agenda, especially to do with the fragmentation of aid management structures, can be embedded in the Government system *without the need to establish institutional incentives to do so*. On the contrary, in the context of Sudan some of the incentives worked the other way: for example, against the transparency of the Government budget.

5.4) SUMMARY OF PROJECT RELEVANCE

A brief summary of the relevance of the project would be that although its objectives were relevant to the context of 2005-2006, the lack of consideration of the full risks and assumptions of the project meant that the intervention logic of the project was *not* coherent with the situation encountered on the ground even in the first inception phase of the project. In order to make headway, the project would need to radically re-shape itself – which is exactly what it did.

For this reason, the Review is not structured around the 6 project outputs from the logframe: if it were, there would be a huge amount to say about the first output and very little to say about the remaining 5. Instead, it applies the 5 DAC evaluation criteria to the three pillars of project activities:

- 1) Capacity Building
- 2) Aid Information Architecture
- 3) Aid Policy Architecture.

These three pillars of activities are judged according to their effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. However, a summary table of project results to date according to the 6 original outputs may be found at Annex 4

6) EFFECTIVENESS

6.1) CAPACITY BUILDING

The Aid Management and Coordination Unit (AMCU) was created in late 2005, with support from the preliminary phase of the project, staffed up with a director, project officers and (from late 2008) technical staff to work on the website and the database. Job descriptions were developed for its staff, who also attended training sessions (see annex 3 for full details). It became the counterpart department for the project team, and influenced the project's capacity-building activities elsewhere in the Ministry. Over the years 2006-2010, a total of 760 attendees took part in 39 training courses and visits under the project. Annex 3 provides details of the dates, training providers and gender breakdown.

In the second year of the project, a strategic decision was taken that the biggest training effort should be directed not at specific technical training but at generic skills, especially English language and computer skills. This was the strong and clear preference of the Ministry, and it reflected the real level of many of the staff. At the same time, it was decided that the beneficiaries of the training should be primarily not senior staff, but junior or middle staff. The background to the decision was explained by the then MIC Undersecretary in terms of the need to develop junior staff as agents of change and reform within the Government structure.

To set in train the language training, a needs assessment of junior to mid level staff (grades 4-9) was conducted. The next step was to identify training institutions able to provide the required training. Institutions were invited to bid for training contracts, and their bids were analysed according to the criteria established. Contracts were then signed and courses undertaken at the training providers selected.

Training evaluations of the courses were generally done in a professional way, on two levels:

- i) Evaluation of the performance of individual trainees, where appropriate. This was necessary in cases of e.g. English classes in order to assess whether the individual would benefit from a further course.
- ii) Evaluations of the training provider. One typical survey of a 2009 British Council course on professional development asked trainees to rate the course facilities, the materials, the training and the skills acquired.

Alongside the training effort, the local area network (LAN) for MIC was established. With the move to the current MIC building in 2010, the network was fully operational except for the ground floor. This enabled all staff within MIC to access SAID through the LAN, without the need to use the web entry to the database. A MIC email server was also established, with ministry email addresses, but in practise most staff still prefer to use Gmail or similar web-based email accounts.

Another attempted route of capacity building was through UNVs. Two UNVs were recruited in 2009 to work alongside counterparts in MIC, not as technical experts but as English-speaking (not Arabic-speaking) generalists offering on-the-job support. Unfortunately, they cut short their contracts and stayed for 6 and 8 months respectively.

Some of the training graduates were, naturally, southerners appointed to the Ministry under the CPA provision of a 20% southern quota for such posts. Most of these are now planning a return to the South in the course of 2011, in which case the North's loss is likely to be the South's gain – an example of an unintended wider impact of the project.

The selection of MIC staff to go on study tours was done on the basis of identifying staff related to the mission purpose, with an element of rotation so that the same staff did not benefit from all study tours. New recruits from South Sudan were also included. As a result of the study tours,

a comparative paper was prepared to compare national experiences which recommended the establishment of a single gateway for aid management. The paper was sent from AMCU to the MIC Minister, and then on to the Vice President and the Council of Impacts.

The project also paid attention to build up the capacity of the MIC Monitoring and Evaluation Department. This made good sense, given the potential impact of M&E as a source of objective information about Aid Effectiveness. The M&E Unit was, outside of AMCU, the unit given most assistance by the project. It was supplied with computers and other facilities, including two vehicles for field trips. It also appears to be relatively favoured in the internal allocation of resources within MIC. Vehicles, for example, are not much use without a budget for petrol and per diems, but the Unit did not identify these as serious problems when interviewed. Their budget for the first quarter of 2011 has now been approved.

A dedicated M&E consultant was also contracted in 2010 to train the unit in results-based monitoring, another plank of the Aid Effectiveness agenda. He used a detailed manual on Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation that the M&E Department has been trained to use. A team also visited two states (Kassala and Blue Nile) to assess state-level M&E structures. In a country like Sudan which is lagging behind in Aid Effectiveness – with little progress to date on the Paris principles—there is much to do, and yet it is still too early to expect concrete results from the work of the M&E Department. It is recommended that the efforts of the M&E Department should be directed at furthering the principles of Aid Effectiveness, especially by identifying examples where the principles of Harmonisation and Results are not currently being respected. These examples can be used to encourage donors to improve their current performance in Sudan. AMCU staff are confident that by the end of 2011 the M&E Unit will have begun to produce real results that contribute to better aid effectiveness.

Establishment of Focal Points

Aid management and coordination requires a whole-of-government approach. This is particularly true in the case of Sudan, where responsibility for aid is divided between three Ministries (MIC, MHA and MoFNE), and shared with State level structures (usually State Ministries of Finance) under the federal constitution. The project therefore set out to establish a network of contact points across different ministries and States. Aid management processes in 20 federal Government structures were analysed in 2007, picking out 5 key elements of Initiation, Planning, Approval, Monitoring and Evaluation. These focal points were assessed for office environment, IT readiness, working relationships and capacity development needs. Meetings were held with focal points to exchange ideas and conduct training.

A similar process was executed at state level for states with the highest concentration of aid – Khartoum, North Kordofan, South Kordofan, Kassala, Gedaref and Red Sea. The detailed reports on the place of aid in the overall policy and planning systems at the State level are a useful guide to practise as it existed at the time. The reports were presented in a workshop to donor and government stakeholders. After the workshops, the Italians based some interventions in Kassala state on the findings of the report. Each of the aid-intensive states (Blue Nile, N Kordofan, S Kordofan, Gedaref, Kassala and Red Sea) received 2 laptops, a desktop, printer, scanner and office furniture.

The Paris Declaration surveys of 2008 (for the Accra HLF) and 2011 (for the Busan HLF) were undertaken with assistance from the project. The AMCU director was the national focal point for the surveys and the CDAMC manager was the donor focal point. But it has been hard work, and these surveys also showed how little progress Sudan has made in implementing the Aid Effectiveness agenda. For instance, the 2008 survey showed that only 23% of aid was recorded in the national budget. The 2011 survey, at the time of writing, was still in progress: only 8 donors and UN agencies had submitted their returns by the due date of the survey.

6.2) AID INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

With trained staff able to build the database, and with a network of focal points across other Government structures to help populate it with information, the project was in a position to start work on building the aid communications architecture. Progress on the database was steady but slow. In 2006 the first desktop version of the Sudan Aid Information Database (SAID) was completed. A data entry screen to track money flows from the executing agency to the project was included. Work began on the web version of SAID in late 2007. Open-source mapping software was used (MapServe), in preference to adopting the proprietary software used by DEVINFO.

The strategic decision taken, relatively early on in the project, was to build a customised database rather than to adopt an off-the-shelf commercial one, such as the Development Assistance Database (DAD), or the Aid Management Platform. The argument in favour of a MIC-built system was that it would give the Ministry more control and ownership. The project bought servers, software, computers and accessories, together with service contracts for back-up and maintenance. It upgraded old computers in the MIC Computer Laboratory, installed internet access in all the working floors of the new MIC building, and renovated the Training Room as requested by the Ministry, including air-conditioning and audio-visual systems.

A total of 18 Ministry staff were trained in how to use SAID (data entry, review, information analysis). Four members of staff were also trained on the Devinfo database used by UNICEF, and 7 technical staff were trained on PHP and the open-source database software MySQL, which was used to build SAID. Data from the UN and WB agencies, through whom most aid is channelled, has now been introduced into the system covering the period 2005-2009, and cross-checked with information from EC, USAID and Japan.

However, the data remains controversial. The donors interviewed in this Review did not feel that the data available in SAID fairly or accurately represented what their countries have given to Sudan. The main reason given is that SAID excludes humanitarian expenditure (which is under HAC) and concessionary loans (under MoFNE). The distinction between humanitarian and development expenditure makes little sense in the context of a “complex emergency” situation like Darfur, but reflects the institutional division of responsibility between MIC and HAC. Efforts to overcome these institutional constraints, and turn SAID into *the* aid-information clearing-house for Sudan – which is what it was set out to be – have not so far been successful. For example, the March 2009 Steering Committee recorded that a joint working group between MIC, MHA and MoFNE had agreed that SAID should be “the repository of all external assistance information”; but that all efforts to implement this commitment had come to nothing. Nevertheless, the database manager at the MHA told this review that he hoped to be able to export data to SAID, in a form that would fit with its fields, by June 2011.

A module to classify projects by which of the MDGs they contribute to has been developed but not yet published. It is due to be published later this year.

MIC Website

The MIC website was also first planned in 2007, with a website committee collecting material for both English and Arabic versions. Website design was undertaken by a specialist design company contracted for the purpose. Translation was carried out by the Translation and Arabization Unit of the University of Khartoum. The site was populated with official documents governing aid and development, such as the annual aid reports for 2005 – 2008 and a report on ODA in Sudan 1956-2009. It also has a permanent link to SAID. At present, maps can be generated at state level and national level. There is talk of extending this down as far as the locality, but it is unclear if this is feasible or worth the effort. Another data-set that would add value to the website is data about the current development needs across the different States. In particular, the forthcoming Sudan Household Survey – already published for the South but apparently not for the North – would be an important addition. Publishing it on the site would be useful, because this kind of material would facilitate a proper dialogue between Government

and donors as to whether current development aid to Sudan is really targeted at the right places and the right sectors. At present, Government Ministers often complain about the distribution of aid to Sudan without using detailed facts and figures to support their case. The debate should be based on agreed disaggregated data.

6.3) AID POLICY ARCHITECTURE

Because of the difficult external circumstances reported earlier, this aspect of the project has been consistently delayed. As early as 2007 a Task force was established between MIC, MoFNE and MHA, called “The Task Force on Better Integration of External Assistance into the National Budget Process” – but this structure never got off the ground, and in fact never even met. The 2009 workplan included work on Aid Policy and Aid Strategy for the second half of the year, but this did not happen because the Ministry (very sensibly) suggested a postponement. The conditions were not right, and the consultancies would not have born fruit.

In the meantime, some basic preparatory work was done, in an effort to increase the knowledge basis of how aid was managed in Sudan. In 2007 a study of the aid management processes of 20 government entities was conducted, and a 168-page report produced. The study showed how complicated and how varied were the existing practises of aid management, although it did not contribute to any process to change or improve those practises. A number of studies were also taken into aid management and coordination systems at state level, in key aid-intensive states: Kassala, Khartoum, Red Sea, Blue Nile, Gedaref, North Kordofan and South Kordofan.

The issue of structural reform in MIC was not included as an activity in the original proposal. However, consultancies on MIC capacity assessment and MIC structural reform are now included in the workplan for the third quarter of 2011. The reason for delaying this work until then is the hope that the institutional context of MIC may be clearer by then, given the persistent rumours that the roles of MIC, HAC and MoFNE in respect of aid are to be redrawn. These consultancies will be very important to consolidate the impact of the training programmes supported by the project.

The decision was also taken to look for consultancy support on aid policy. An Aid Strategy consultant was recruited in late 2010 with a TOR to assist the government to develop a such strategy, based on clear roles of government, donors and other stakeholders based on the Aid Effectiveness principles. It will be a tough assignment, given the current absence of a coherent nationally-owned development plan. The JAM was a kind of externally-supported PRSP, but it has lapsed since the Oslo conference of 2008. The 2007-2011 Five Year Plan was described by donor interviewees as lacking the level of detail that would make it a coherent planning framework. There have been statements of intent to produce an interim PRSP, but so far these have not come to fruition. However, it now seems that in 2011 there is more impetus to produce a PRSP, so as to apply for debt relief under the HIPC scheme. It remains to be seen whether a full PRSP will see the light of day.

7) EFFICIENCY

Project audits were conducted in 2006 and 2009 as part of broader audits of UNDP operations in Sudan. The Reviewer asked to see these audits but was informed by UNDP that they were confidential. The information below on the efficiency of the project is therefore taken primarily from the project’s own financial reporting. The EC Court of Auditors also conducted an audit in 2009.

The delay of project activities already reported meant that expenditure lagged behind annual budget estimates, and it was possible to continue the project on a no-cost extension basis. The overall figures reported by the project in December 2010 were as follows:

Project Expenditure to Date (euros)			
Expenditure Item	Budget	Expenditure	Balance
	July 06 - Dec 10	July 06 - Dec 10	
Human Resources	1,365,110	944,383	420,727
Travel	182,356	185,056	- 2,700
Equipment and Supplies	444,445	328,330	116,115
Local office/project costs	94,875	110,033	- 15,158
Other costs/services	726,632	339,471	387,161
Administration (7%)	196,939	133,609	63,330
TOTAL	3,010,357	2,040,882	969,475

It can be seen that overall the project still has almost 1 million euros unspent by the end of December 2010. Only two budget lines were overspent, by minimal amounts: travel, caused by the high cost of study tours to neighbouring countries; and local office/project costs, caused by higher than expected vehicle maintenance costs and office utilities.

The project proposal envisaged that the project would start of under UNDP's Direct Execution modality (DEX), leaving open the possibility that it would move to National Execution modality (NEX). This would have been prospectively cheaper, as well as increasing Government ownership of the project. Interestingly, interviewees consulted on the question – including those from the MIC – were unanimous in urging caution about any change from DEX to NEX. The risk they saw was not so much that Government systems (especially procurement systems) were too slow – indeed, many commented that UNDP's were even slower – but that it risked dragging the project in to all the political considerations of the Government. The visible UNDP presence in the project added value.

7.1) CAPACITY BUILDING

The project invested heavily in equipment to support its capacity building objectives. The table below gives the unit costs in euros of some of the common items purchased by the project:

Item	Unit Cost (euros)	Number Purchased July 2006 - Dec 2010	Total Cost (euros)
Computer + table	2,032	60	121,908
Printer	1,663	10	16,630
UPS	1,700	8	13,600
Photocopiers	4,491	6	26,949
Filing Cabinet	2,181	6	13,089

The project uses the UNDP procurement system, which draws on the international market. The computer costs are not particularly economic. Given the comparatively low level of computer skills in the Ministry – with very few skills beyond standard Office applications – it could have been more efficient to buy lower-specification machines in higher numbers. For instance, one of the Directorates interviewed said they currently shared 2 computers between 10 staff. That is

2 computers more than they had before the project started, but still means that the Ministry retains staff in post without some of the basic equipment necessary for them to be productive.

7.2) AID COMMUNICATION ARCHITECTURE

Network and database software has cost the project 42,000 euros over the period July 2006 – December 2010; and ICT installations and connections a further 50,000 euros. These appear acceptable costs, comfortably less than those initially budgeted. However, there are concerns about the sustainability of the ongoing costs of internet access and web server hosting.

There has also been a tendency for some of the technical architecture to be over-specified. An obvious example is the adoption of an email server supplying MIC staff with individual MIC email addresses (@mic.gov.sd). Almost all MIC staff who use email prefer to rely on a Gmail address, which they find easier to use. This is fairly common for users with limited technical level, and could have been foreseen.

8) IMPACT

8.1) CAPACITY BUILDING

Although the AMCU Director regrets that no baseline survey of AMCU capacity was done at proposal-stage to benchmark later progress, surveys were done in 2006 (baseline) and 2008 (follow-up survey). These show a marked improvement in MIC staff capacity. Able to use English effectively in dealing with donors, and comfortable with computers, they have the skills to do the job. MIC staff who have attended individual training courses and completed course questionnaires generally rated their impact as high. In a focus group discussion for this Review of non-AMCU staff, they rated the following as the most important new skills they had learnt:

- English language
- Computer skills
- Presentation skills
- Report Writing

They also reported that besides learning new skills, they had been able to implement them in their jobs: they were more confident in dealing with donors, better at writing reports, had developed new templates for travel permits etc.

But when the same focus group was asked to identify the obstacles that now prevent them from doing their jobs better, they identified:

- 1) Lack of clear planning. “We are always doing things in response to something, we are not able to plan”.
- 2) Lack of clear job descriptions: we are not clear what it is that we are supposed to do.

The point about these difficulties or obstacles is that none of them would be solved by further training sessions or workshops. They can only be tackled by serious review of the internal organisation of the Ministry, its work processes and human resource management, as well as by a better understanding with other Ministries. Fortunately, consultancies on MIC Capacity Assessment and MIC Structural Reform are planned for later in 2011. The Capacity Assessment TORs cover:

- ✓ Mapping the MIC’s departmental/directorate, responsibilities and functions according to decrees, sub-decrees and policies according to MIC mandate
- ✓ Evaluate the alignment of MIC’s current functional capacities with its new organizational structure, mandate and responsibilities (existing capacity)
- ✓ Assess the MIC’s required functional capacities based on management, staff and stakeholders’ expectations and strategic needs (desired capacity)
- ✓ Analysing and identify strengths and gaps within the MIC’s existing capacity versus the MIC’s mandate, responsibilities and desired level of capacity

- ✓ Review current capacities and identifying new areas for capacity enhancement to address the issue of the new organizational structure.

This Consultancy is to be complemented by another that looks at MIC Structural Reform:

- ✓ Review directorate/unit roles, line of authorities and responsibilities
- ✓ Identify, design, develop and ensure the implementation of appropriate systems and procedures are consistent and sufficient
- ✓ Prepare a suitable job design including job description and specification
- ✓ Determine and propose optimal staffing level, skills and competencies necessary for each job
- ✓ Review and recommend the appropriate grading and organizational structure

These consultancies will be vital in order to consolidate the work done by the project on capacity-building, which has focused on training but has not to date covered the structural aspects including management systems, budgets, job descriptions, workflow processes and procedures.

The Review has looked for evidence of staff retention rates, because low retention rates would mean that the value of training was limited. Here, the evidence is mixed. The retention rate of staff within AMCU over the course of the project has been high. The current Director reports that only one staff member has left since 2008. But there is some evidence that problems of staff retention may have been displaced from AMCU to some other Directorates within MIC. The salary top-up enjoyed by AMCU staff is also received by EDF Unit and UN Unit. Other Directorates also receive some financial incentives, but not on a systematic and regular basis. Further details on retention are given in Annex 3.

The project has also undertaken some important work in building up capacity to manage aid at state level. Although the constitution decentralises many functions to state level, the split between development and humanitarian aid – a notable obstacle to the development of aid architecture at federal level – is also reproduced at state level. There is no MIC at state level; the aid-coordination role is normally undertaken by a department in the State Ministry of Finance. At the same time, responsibility for humanitarian aid rests with State Humanitarian Aid Commissions. These State HACs report financially and administratively to the Governor; but technically (and on security issues) to the MHA in Khartoum. The project has therefore worked to build the capacity of the relevant Departments in the State MOFs, through the provision of computers, office equipment and training. It has been an advocate – in the face of much scepticism – of the importance of managing aid at state level. In some states like South Kordofan, where aid runs at 20-30% of the State budget, this importance has been understood.

It is not possible to reach a conclusion about state-level capacity building in this review, because the time did not permit visits to the States to assess the impact. Although relevant officials were contacted by phone, and affirmed the importance of the project's contribution to their work, this is no substitute for a field visit. It is recommended that time be set aside in the final evaluation of the project to make visits to two states to assess the impact of capacity building work at this level.

8.2) AID INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

One very attractive – and normally impossible – way of assessing the impact of a website is to take it off-line and see what happens. By coincidence, the MIC website was taken down by a hacker and remained inaccessible for 4 days during the Review. When visited, the site said simply “hacked by SWAT”, with nothing else visible. So interviewees were asked if they had noticed or how they had found out that the site was down. Donors consulted were unaware of the down-time. Likewise none of the focus-group of non-AMCU MIC staff were aware of it, although they still had access to SAID through the MIC intranet.

The conclusion – borne out by site statistics on page views and visits – is that the website has a pretty small audience, because there are few reasons for people to visit it on a regular basis. It has little fresh content besides information on the Minister's activities. There is no information, for example, about upcoming meetings, or events. The website is essentially static, and its functions limited:

- An online brochure for MIC, setting out what the Ministry does.
- A repository of a limited set of official documents (annual reports etc.)
- A window to the SAID database

It would be comparatively simple to upgrade the website and use it as a more active informational tool. The website management committee should consider the recommendation that the MIC website should be refreshed by including timely information about forthcoming meetings and events, to make it a useful channel of communication. It should also include services required by donor partners, for example travel authorisations. However, the website has to comply with Government guidelines and regulations on official websites. For example, in 2009/10, the MIC website was audited for compliance by the National Information Council, and some changes were requested and made.

In terms of the SAID database, donors interviewed said they were reluctant to use it because they did not rate highly the accuracy of the data it contained. A couple of quotations reinforce the point:

"If I need data figures for Sudan, then I go to the OECD DAC database. I do not go to SAID".

"We think the structure of SAID is good, but I don't really use it because the data is so bad. I have difficulties to recognise my own data."

The project team has had its own problems in collecting data from many donors. But these are problems that can be fixed. There is no good reason why SAID cannot include data that donors recognise as their own figures. Agreed figures for past development expenditure can provide a common basis of information for donors and government to work from; and conversely, not having such a common basis makes it harder for donors and the government to work together, harder to develop a political constituency for aid, and harder to build the aid management architecture. Nevertheless, the difficulties of fixing the problem should not be underestimated, and may require imaginative solutions. For example, instead of recording all development aid from 2005 to date, it may be better to draw a line under the earlier years, in one way or another, and concentrate on getting agreed figures for 2009 or 2010 only. There is a role here for UNDP to use its "honest broker" status to bring donors and MIC together around the table and agree a way forward. It is therefore recommended that UNDP at a senior level should take the lead in getting donors and MIC to agree a way of reaching figures for development aid that are accepted by all, and can be uploaded to SAID. After such agreement has been reached, detailed follow-up work can be done by AMCU's staff with individual donors to get individual figures for inputting into SAID. This campaign of "outreach" would go far to ensure the sustainability of SAID, and would underpin its aspiration to be a single gateway for aid information in Sudan – as it was always intended to be.

Nevertheless, there are other customers who do find SAID to be a useful resource. It is certainly used by MIC staff to generate reports, especially on specific donors or specific states, in response to queries from Ministers and senior officials. Additional content could also be put on SAID to make it more interesting and useful to its target audiences. AMCU should consider the value of including in SAID the following data-sets, identified by interviewees of this Review:

- The comparison of donor pledges made (Oslo 1, 2 etc.) with actual disbursements.
- Poverty reduction, gender, MDGs.

- Forward-looking data on aid projections to complement the existing retrospective information.
- Humanitarian aid and concessionary loans.
- Take it down to the level of the individual project.

Enriching SAID, and indeed the MIC website, with this kind of information could enable these information tools to improve the quality of aid decisions taken in Sudan – currently rather low, as shown in the latest report to the Busan HLF on Aid Effectiveness. One senior Government official stressed the importance of this decision-making role if the website is to achieve its full impact:

“The database has to help you to make the right decisions by giving you the right information. Are we, for example, giving too much to one sector? Is money flowing down to the States in the right proportion?”

With greater depth of information, and with broader credibility for its figures, SAID would be much better placed to fulfil its intention to be a one-stop-shop for aid information and statistics in Sudan.

8.3) AID POLICY ARCHITECTURE

Activities related to aid policy have been pushed back towards the end of the project, so it is not yet possible to form a judgement on their impact. However, it is possible to make a recommendation that would support the impact of the project’s work on aid architecture. The institutional memory of donors in Sudan is generally low, and many of their staff live a kind of informational fog until they leave the country to go to another posting. Meanwhile, the project has already produced a number of documents that cast interesting and useful light on the current aid management and aid information systems in Sudan. Among the more prominent of such documents are:

- Study on Aid Processes
- State level research on aid management in aid-intensive states
- Manual on Results-based M&E.

These and similar documents are a publicly-funded resource that are not currently widely known or circulated. And yet they are an important fund of information that would be useful to many stakeholders. The project is missing an opportunity to make these reports and papers more widely available. All such information products should be given a wider distribution, for example by posting them on the website. Although these information products do not yet constitute an “aid policy architecture”, they may provide some of the essential foundations on which such an architecture can be built.

9) SUSTAINABILITY

9.1) CAPACITY BUILDING

In reviewing capacity-building programs such as this one, the key question is often: to what extent is the project *building* capacity and to what extent is it *replacing* it or *substituting* for the lack of it? Naturally, a project that spends its time and effort replacing or substituting capacity will have very low sustainability.

In this regard, there is evidence that in the early days, the project did indeed spend too much time doing activities itself rather than assisting AMCU to do them. One of the early project managers commented in June 2008 that “AMCU staff are not involved in many of the project activities: development of SAID, implementation of the Paris Declaration Survey, the development and implementation of an ODA data collection exercise and dialogue with donors. These were all undertaken by project staff.” However, the situation has improved since then, as

AMCU has grown in capacity and staffing. It is now responsible for key tasks like the maintenance of the database and the website, and the production of reports on specific donor activities. Current data collection to update SAID is entirely done by MIC staff. The current work on the Aid Effectiveness survey for the Busan HLF, is being undertaken as a joint activity between AMCU and the project – a shared undertaking that builds the confidence and practical on-the-job skills that underpin real operational capacity. This is as it should be.

It was reported earlier that the project has invested a lot of time, and money (paying for two vehicles as well as computers, training and office equipment), in M&E both at the level of MIC and at the level of two target states. This investment in M&E, combined with the overall information base of SAID, has great potential. It has given a welcome boost to a Directorate in the Ministry that was only fully staffed up in 2010, and the new staff have been motivated by their improving conditions of work and skills. However, there are risks. The M&E Director, interviewed by this Review in late February, had still not received confirmation of his annual budget, necessary for his department to undertake the planned annual programme of monitoring visits – although this is expected to come soon. A further complication is that half (5 out of 10) of the M&E Department staff, including its Director, are due to return to South Sudan this year. It will be important to maintain the focus on M&E throughout 2011, because of the frail nature of what has been put in place so far. For example, the SAID database already contains information about 1494 projects, which is a huge number to monitor (although far less than the figure for the HAC database, which apparently has 16,000 project just for 2009), and it is not clear how the M&E Unit will identify its monitoring targets. It is recommended that the project management team should pay close attention in the rest of 2011 to embedding in MIC a strong focus on M&E. The objective is to build some practical case-histories in which M&E is used to influence a specific decision or to dialogue with (and challenge) a specific donor. This is already included in the project workplan for 2011, and is very important.

The issue of training provision also raises questions about the sustainability of the project outcomes. The project has done far more training of MIC staff in the last five years than has MIC's own Training Unit. It would be easy to question the sustainability of that. Nevertheless, the project may well have got better value for money. Professional comparisons of the credentials of different training providers have been made; in contrast the Training Unit is obliged by existing Government rules to use, for example, a single provider for English language training.

The sustainability of training outcomes also depends on staff retention. It has already been mentioned that this has been less an issue for AMCU, than for some other Departments of MIC. The Ministry has a policy of rotation of staff, and a new rotation within MIC is now overdue. If and when such a rotation happens, there are likely to be problems with staff retention, because some staff may lose the top-ups they currently enjoy. However, training graduates who leave MIC would take their skills with them, and at least one senior interviewee was relaxed about the prospect:

The project has focused on the young people in the Ministry, and that is right. As you get older, you get out of touch and that is why we need young people. Yes, there are problems with retention. But the answer is to send more people for training.

9.2) AID INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

The maintenance of the project achievements in terms of a functioning database and MIC website depends on two components:

- i) Payment for web hosting and internet connection fees. The project has paid for these costs to date, and will do so up until the end of the project.
- ii) Qualified, trained and motivated staff to maintain and update the website. The current AMCU staff certainly fit the bill: 3 IT officers and 3 project officers with the right qualities. They are also paid a salary “top-up” direct from the Ministry of

Finance of between 50 and 70%. Only one staff member has left the unit since 2008, so staff retention is also good.

What is the prospect of the Ministry of Finance picking up the hosting and connection fees, and continuing with the “top-ups”, after the end of the project? In principle, the Ministry of Finance has budgeted for at least some of these costs, but that is no guarantee. As one interviewee commented: “Approval of the money is one thing; disbursement is another”. However, the fact that the State Minister of Finance has intimate knowledge of MIC, and of the project, is an encouraging sign.

The MIC website is, currently, a fairly low-maintenance website because it is not updated with any great frequency. If the website is improved, along the lines earlier recommended in this Review, then the staff costs of running it will increase. However, in its current form it may still be considered as a fairly sustainable part of the project output, although its value is limited. It is to be hoped that the website committee will be reactivated to look at improving the website, but money will be required to do this. The budget has been approved, but the funds not yet disbursed.

9.3) AID POLICY ARCHITECTURE

The context for the aid policy outputs of the project has been consistently hostile since at least 2006, and especially since 2009. If, as one of the interviewees put it, “there is no real constituency for aid in the Council of Ministers,” then many of the project outputs may not last long once project funding is withdrawn. Much will depend on whether the role of the Ministry is expanded or reduced over the next year, with the prospect of both a ministerial reshuffle, and the new constitution to which the Government is committed. If MIC secures a role with a bit more meat than its current one, which is centred on information only, then the project’s role in promoting a better policy architecture for aid will prove a good investment. But at the moment it is too early to tell.

There are some signs that the context may, however, be improving. One is the renewed interest shown in completing an I-PRSP, as a key to unlocking HIPC debt relief. Another is the prospect that development aid may, with oil incomes curtailed, become a more significant or more dynamic part of the national budget. There is also the possibility of a Donor Consultative Group, but this has not yet materialised. The project has made some small progress in developing the “constituency for aid” by selling the virtues of SAID within the Sudanese Government. For example, in 2010 a group of AMCU staff presented SAID first to the Coordination Committee of Undersecretaries, then to the Economic Sector Ministerial Committee, and finally to the Council of Ministers. It was favourably commented that never before had such relatively junior officers presented to the Council of Ministers. Laying the foundations for such a constituency could be a lasting heritage of the project. It is recommended that – even or especially if the formal products of the work on aid architecture (Aid on Budget, Aid Strategy) do not progress, for whatever reason – the project should seek opportunities to promote the political constituency for aid in Sudan. Reaching agreement with donors on the data in SAID, for example, would be a step in this direction. The planned workshop on international cooperation will be another opportunity, especially the brainstorming meetings held beforehand including Government and donors.

10) MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The project has been overseen by two management structures:

- 1) The Senior Management Committee, comprised of senior representatives from MIC (at Under-Secretary level), UNDP, and the EU Delegation. This group met three times between 2008 and October 2010.

- 2) The Steering Committee, co-chaired by MIC (at Under-Secretary level) and UNDP, and including MOF, MFA, EU Delegation, a donor representative, and representatives from focal point Ministries such as the MHA, National Information Centre etc. The 8th, most recent, meeting of this Committee took place in November 2010.

Both groups have considered and endorsed the annual workplans, while the Senior Management Committee has concentrated on financial aspects including requests for project extensions for the calendar years 2009, 2010 and 2011. Minutes are available for most of these meetings, which record the major decisions taken, especially on the workplan and project extensions. It appears that this aspect of project management has performed in a satisfactory way. Less satisfactory elements are covered in the section on project Challenges below.

11) PROJECT CHALLENGES

11.1) PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Although the management structures mentioned above have performed satisfactorily, three sets of management problems have affected the project:

- 1) Role of Project Manager. The first project manager, Philippe Chechereau, managed the project during its inception phase but promptly left, in December 2006, apparently because his contract was not renewed. There followed a 10-month gap before a successor was recruited. The new project manager, Del Singh, joined in October 2007 and remained in post only a few months, leaving in May 2008. After his departure, Nazar Eltahir, previously the Database Manager (CHECK!) was appointed acting interim Project Manager. He has remained in that capacity to date, having been neither confirmed as Project Manager or replaced by another. This was unfortunate, to say the least. To have a manager “acting” in post for almost three years, and still counting, is not recommended in any human resources manual.
- 2) Delayed recruitment. The 10-month gap in recruiting a new project manager has just been noted. It is not the only instance of slow recruitment in the course of the project. A new database developer had to be recruited twice in the course of the project. Once it took 4 months, and the second time 8 months. Recruiting the current Administrative and Financial Officer took 8 months. No one underestimates the difficulties of recruiting the right staff for these posts (and it is true that AMCU has also had its own problems in recruiting staff, especially for IT posts). But what is clear is that means have not yet been found to overcome those difficulties.
- 3) Changes of management structure within UNDP. The changes in project manager might have been compensated for by consistent management support from UNDP. Unfortunately, that has not been the case. The project has been shifted around within UNDP several times over its 5-year span. It started off under the Governance Unit; then Governance and Rule of Law; then Crisis Prevention and Recovery; and is currently under MDGs, Poverty Reduction and HIV. The second shift was particularly important to the project because it moved the project out of the remit of UNDP’s Strategic Partnership on the Rule of Law with DFID and the Netherlands Government, and therefore funding from this source ceased. The money was in effect replaced by EU funding, but it weakened the connection with donor governments that should have been important stakeholders in the project. The transfers of responsibility for the project weakened the institutional knowledge and management support for the project by UNDP, almost as if it were an “orphan” project within UNDP. It might not have mattered if there had been effective input from UNDP’s Management Support Unit (MSU), which according to the project proposal was supposed to provide M&E support to the project. Sadly no evidence of such support from the MSU has been forthcoming. Also missing has been the quality assurance function – with a new officer recently appointed after a 10-month gap.

11.2) DONOR/GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

It has already been said that the project was and is hostage to the relationship between Government and major donors. Project staff have remained unsatisfied with the quality of information they have received from donors about their funding in Sudan. The most recent project report refers to “the lack of commitment from donors to share data⁴”. Donors consulted in the course of this Review refute the claim, arguing that they have submitted information to SAID but have sometimes not recognised the figures that it produces for their own expenditure. They suspect political motives may be lurking behind. Whatever the background, the 2006 Paris Declaration Survey in Sudan failed because of lack of data; the 2008 Survey was only possible because information from multilaterals filled in the gaps of the bilaterals; and by the first deadline for the 2011 Survey, only 8 donors had submitted their information.

There has also been a lack of commitment by the Government side to establishing a coherent aid-information architecture – without which no aid management strategy can function. As an example, this report has already mentioned the “Task Force on Better Integration of External Assistance into the National Budget Mechanism”, supposed to meet every three weeks for a year, that never in fact met. A Joint Committee for the Coordination of External Assistance Information was set up in 2007, but attempts to follow up its recommendations with the MHA have not born results. A Decree of the Council of Ministers dated 15 October 2009 noted that aid information should be focused on MIC, but implementation has not materialised.

Underlying the problem is the well-known divide of aid functions between the MHA (humanitarian), the MoFNE (concessionary loans) and the MIC. The dynamic between these three bodies is changing and there may yet be major reform. But it should not be counted on, because the split has a powerful dynamic of its own. Sudan is a special case in many ways, and the divide serves important interests: the MHA is in effect the Ministry that handles NGOs and with them the security concerns that are a Government priority in development as in other arenas; and the MIC has its own role in keeping the inquisitive eyes of donors away from the MoFNE where the real heavy-lifting work is done. Nevertheless, efforts continue to improve the situation, for example through the Technical Committee that brings together MIH, MoFNE and MHA.

12) SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following summary of recommendations is included for ease of use. The background and justification for each of the recommendations given below is to be found in the section of the report shown in brackets.

- 1) The efforts of the M&E Department should be directed at furthering the principles of Aid Effectiveness, especially by identifying examples where the Paris principles of Harmonisation and Results are not currently being respected. (section 6.1)
- 2) Time be set aside in the final evaluation of the project to make visits to two states to assess the impact of capacity building work at this level. (8.1)
- 3) The MIC website should be refreshed by including timely information about forthcoming meetings and events, to make it a useful channel of communication. (8.2)
- 4) UNDP at a senior level should take the lead in getting donors and AMCU to agree a way of reaching figures for development aid that are accepted by all, and can be uploaded to SAID. (8.2)
- 5) AMCU should consider the value of including in SAID the following data-sets, identified by interviewees of this Review:
 - the comparison of donor pledges made (Oslo 1, 2 etc.) with actual disbursements.

⁴ Progress Report 1 January 2006 – 31 December 2010, page 24.

- Poverty reduction, gender, MDGs.
 - A forward-looking data on aid projections to complement the existing retrospective information
 - Humanitarian and concessionary loans – in effect to make SAID the Government's single gateway on aid flows.
 - Take it down to the level of the individual project. (8.2)
- 6) Information products that come out of the project should be given a wider distribution, for example by posting them on the website (8.3)
 - 7) The project management team should pay close attention in the rest of 2011 to embedding in MIC a strong focus on M&E. The objective is to build some practical case-histories in which M&E is used to influence a specific decision or to dialogue with (and challenge) a specific donor. (9.1)
 - 8) The project should seek opportunities to promote the political constituency for aid in Sudan – even or especially if the formal products of the work on aid architecture (Aid on Budget, Aid Strategy) do not progress, for whatever reason. (9.3)

ABBREVIATIONS

AID	Aid Information Database
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMCU	Aid Management and Coordination Unit (MIC)
CDAMC	Capacity Development for Aid Management and Coordination
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DAG	Donor Assistance Group
DEX	Direct Execution (UNDP)
DFID	Department For International Development (UK)
EU	European Union
GIS	Geographic Imagery System
HAC	Humanitarian Aid Commission
HLF	High Level Forum
I-PRSP	Interim-Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
JNTT	Joint National Transition Team
LAN	Local Area Network (ICT)
JAM	Joint Assessment Mission
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDTF	Multi Donor Trust Fund
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MHA	Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs
MIC	Ministry of International Cooperation
MoLHR	Ministry of Labour and Human Resources
MOFNE (MoF)	Ministry of Finance and National Economy
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NIC	National Information Centre
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (under the UN Secretary General)
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PFM	Public Financial Management
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAID	Sudan Aid Information Database
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
ToRs	Terms of Reference
UNRC/HC	UN Resident Coordinator / Humanitarian Coordinator

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

The Capacity Development for Aid Management and Coordination (CDAMC) project document was signed in late 2005 and the key annexes were signed on 17 July 2006. The project was operational by mid 2006, based in the Ministry of International Cooperation (MIC).

The key objectives for the project are to:

- Develop the capacities of the Government, with MIC as a focal point, to perform its aid related functions: collection and dissemination of information, fund mobilization, monitoring and evaluation, and coordination and regulation of partners' relations.
- Promote and encourage the incorporation and harmonization of aid strategies, policies and processes within appropriate national management systems.

The project is directly executed by UNDP according to the Direct Implementation (DIM) modality and falls under the Poverty & MDGs Unit at UNDP. It is managed and implemented by a team composed of Project Manager, Capacity Development Officer, Database Manager, and Database Developer who are all based in MIC. Detailed donors contribution to the CDAMC project: (EUD: USD 2,069,955.18, DFID: USD 422,460, Netherlands: USD 250,000, UNDP: USD 121,331.57, Italy: USD 43,685.72)

The Aid Management and Coordination Unit (AMCU) of MIC was established in late 2005 to serve as the delivery mechanism to achieve the project objectives. The Unit reports directly to the MIC Undersecretary and is tasked with coordinating government and development partner aid activities through an aid information system supported by requisite processes and policies, through a network of aid coordination focal points located across several ministries.

Purpose

The purpose of the assignment is to carry out a mid-term review (MTR) of the Capacity Development for Aid Management & Coordination (CDAMC) Project. This review will assess progress made and make recommendations on the need for possible corrective measures to achieve the intended results as envisaged by the project document and make possible recommendations on the enhancement of MIC staff capacity.

Specific objectives

The main purpose of the requested review of CDAMC project is to assess progress in achieving the expected results to date. The evaluation will use the standard EUD evaluation methodology to cover effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and impact and draw lessons from the overall implementation of the project to date.

Description of Responsibilities :

More specifically, the assignment will:

- Assess the progress towards achievement of the intended results, timeframe and work plan stated in the project document.
- Assess realistically institutional and managerial strengthen of MIC to accomplish its mandate regarding aid effectiveness including the effectiveness of training provided to MIC staff
- To present key finding, draw lessons learned and provide a set of clear best practices and forward-looking options to inform management decisions for the current and future programming
- Review implementation issues and concerns that covers programme and policy levels

- Provide a basis for identifying appropriate actions in addressing gaps and reinforce initiatives that demonstrate the potential for success and continuity of the project

Another purpose of the evaluation is to provide recommendations on the project extension and / or reformation, sustainability elements for managing SAID and MIC website in the future including its resources, management and institutional implementation framework, taking into account the future and unfinished activities and reformulating possible work plan and strategies. Assess the future of AMCU in terms of organization and management; IT readiness, work planning and monitoring of activities and reporting

Deliverables

- An inception report for the overall evaluation exercise Evaluation report outlining key findings, lessons learned and recommendations in the area of Aid management in Sudan; and an analysis of project support. A comprehensive (synthesis) evaluation report covering the issues outlined in the terms of reference and inception report. The synthesis report will include an executive summary that highlights findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned; A final report upon receipt of comments from MIC, UNDP & EU on the draft final report. The MIC, UNDP & EU will provide comments within 10 days or approve the final report.
- Provide substantial feedback to Sudan government in Aid management.\
- An evaluation brief for use in stakeholder presentations, and a methodology brief to facilitate the learning of lessons from the evaluation process;
- PowerPoint presentations for senior management with MIC, UNDP and EU and other stakeholders to be used during stakeholder feedback sessions as necessary.

Fees, per diems, reimbursables and working hours

The assignment is for 17 working days. Fees will be paid for the working days on which services are provided. The total duration of the assignment will be up to 21 days. The total duration of the assignment is defined as the " total engagement including holidays and weekends". The current working days are based on a five-day working week.

ANNEX 2: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Name	Position/Institution
Nazar Eltahir	Acting Project Manager, CDAMC
Baha Sharief	Capacity Development Officer, CDAMC
Faisal Guma	Director, Aid Management & Coordination Unit, MIC
Sarah Mottage	Aid Management & Coordination Unit, MIC
Manal Omer	Aid Management & Coordination Unit, MIC
Mohammed Amin	Aid Management & Coordination Unit, MIC
Lubna Mohammed	Aid Management & Coordination Unit, MIC
Mariam Haider	Aid Management & Coordination Unit, MIC
Mahmoud Harun	Financial Bilateral Cooperation, MIC
Elgaili Mohamed El Bashir	Undersecretary, MIC
Mekki Meghani Osman	Director, External Resources, MIC
Lumumba Maklele Nyajok	Director, M&E, MIC
Nadir Elriah	Deputy Director, M&E, MIC
Nuha Mohammed	UN Desk, MIC
Sawson Ali	Financial Bilateral Cooperation, MIC
Samia Osman	M&E Department, MIC
Yousif Abdalla Adam	Bilateral Cooperation, MIC
Mohammed Mahgoub	EDF Unit, MIC
Mahmoud Harun	Financial Bilateral Cooperation, MIC
Ibrahim Amir Khalil	Database specialist, MHA
Marriet Schuurman	Head of Development Cooperation, Netherlands Embassy
Fatima Elsheikh	HIV, MDGs, and Poverty Reduction unit, UNDP
Jorge Pereiro Pinon	Head of Section, EU Delegation in Sudan
Ben LeRoith	DfID Sudan
Feisal Baghir	Deputy Head of Planning Unit, MIC
Elfatih Ali Siddig	State Minister, MoFNE
Gamal	State Ministry of Finance, Kassala State
Hassan Nasr	High Council for Decentralisation

ANNEX 3: TRAINING SESSIONS

Training Course	Date (from – to)	Training Provider	Training Location	Qualification or Certificate (if any)	Participants: Men	Participants: Women	Total Participants	No. of MIC Participants	No. still in MIC
Office Management	28 th December 2005- 17 th January 2006	Sudan Academy for Administrative Science (SAAS)	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	25	23	48	11	11
Ethiopia Study Tour	30 th April- 4 th May 2006	N/A	Ethiopia- Addis Ababa	-	2	3	5	3	1
Aid Business Process	27 th May 2006 – 1 st June 2006	Sudan Academy for Administrative Science (SAAS)	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	25	23	48	11	11
Project Cycle Management (Group 1)	2 nd -7 th December 2006	Near East Foundation- Centre of Development Services	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	13	11	24	12	10
Project Cycle Management (Group 2)	9 th -14 th December 2006	Near East Foundation- Centre of Development Services	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	12	12	24	11	11
Monitoring and Evaluation (Group 1)	16 th -19 th December 2006	Near East Foundation- Centre of Development Services	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	13	11	24	12	10
Monitoring and Evaluation (Group 2)	20 th -24 th December 2006	Near East Foundation- Centre of Development Services	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	12	12	24	11	11
DevInfo workshop	5 th -15 th May 2007	Hosted by Unicef - Egypt	Egypt - Cairo	-	4	1	5	2	2
Basic Computer Course	25 th June- 8 th August 2007	NIIT	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course	8	10	18	18	15

				Certificate					
PHP & Mysql	3 rd June - 4 th September 2007	NIIT	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	2	1	3	2	2
Aid Effectiveness in Eastern & Southern Africa Workshop	5 th – 7 th November 2008	Hosted by UNDP/ MOF - Kenya	Kenya	-	3	2	5	2	2
Computer Training (Intermediate& Advance Office)	8 th September- 23 rd December 2007	NIIT	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	7	19	26	26	26
Paris Declaration Survey Workshop & Aid Information Management Systems Clinic	22 nd - 25 th January 2008	Hosted by OECD/ DAC- Rwanda	Rwanda	-	3	2	5	3	2
From Capacity Assessment to Capacity Development Strategies Workshop	11 th -14 th February 2008	Hosted by UNDP (Capacity Development Group for Arab Region)/ Syria	Syria	-	2	2	4	2	2
General English Course (Pre- Intermediate)	2 nd December 2007- 2 nd February 2008	British Council / Sudan	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	7	7	14	14	14
Report Writing (Group 1)	17 th -21 st February 2008	British Council / Sudan	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	4	19	23	23	23
Presentation Skills (Group 1)	24 th – 28 th February 2008	British Council / Sudan	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	4	19	23	23	23
Effective Aid Management	25 th -30 th May 2008	Centre of Development	Egypt - Cairo	Completed training course	3	9	12	12	12

(Group 1)		Services- Cairo		Certificate					
General English Course (Intermediate) Two Groups	1 st July 2008- 1 st September 2008	British Council / Sudan	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	12	27	39	39	38
General English Course (Upper Intermediate) Two Groups	7 th September 2008- 7 th November 2008	British Council / Sudan	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	13	29	42	40	38
Effective Aid Management (Group 2)	19 th -24 th December 2008	Centre of Development Services- Cairo	Egypt - Cairo	Completed training course Certificate	3	9	12	12	12
Report Writing (Group 2)	30 th November- 4 th December 2008	British Council / Sudan	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	8	9	17	17	17
Presentation Skills (Group 2)	10 th – 15 th December 2008	British Council / Sudan	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	8	9	17	17	17
Writing & Professional Skills Training (Report Writing, Presentation Skills and Minutes Taking)	27 th April 27 th July 2009	British Council / Sudan	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	9	27	36	36	36
Tanzania Study Tour	22 nd – 25 th June 2009	N/A	Tanzania	-	2	11	13	13	13
International Aid Transparency Initiative Consultation Workshop for East and Southern Africa Workshop	29 th 30 th June 2010	Hosted by OECD/ Hosted by UNDP- Rwanda	Kigali, Rwanda	-	3	1	4	2	2
CCNA	15 th -23 rd August 2009	NIIT	Sudan - Khartoum	-	3	1	4	3	3
Ethiopia Study Tour	5 th - 9 th	N/A	Ethiopia-	-	7	2	9	8	7

	October 2009		Addis Ababa						
International Cooperation Issues	1 st -11 th February 2010	Hosted by MIC	Sudan - Khartoum	-	19	5	24	24	24
Computer Course for new recruits	1 st March -1 st May 2010	NIIT	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	9	5	14	14	14
Office Management for new recruits	9 th – 13 th May 2010	Hosted by MIC/ Italian Embassy	Sudan - Khartoum		19	5	24	24	24
Capacity Development Programme for new recruits	21 st January – 10 th February 2010	Hosted by MIC	Sudan - Khartoum	-	19	5	24	24	24
Aid Effectiveness for new recruits	24 th -30 th May 2010	Centre of Development Services- Cairo	Egypt - Cairo	Completed training course Certificate	19	5	24	24	24
Communication Skills & Research Methodology and Analysis	15 th June- 20 th June 2010	Organizational Capacity Developers Institute	Manzini, Swaziland,	Completed training course Certificate	6	15	21	21	21
Assertiveness Training	12 th – 21 st June 2010	Administration Development Centre	Egypt - Cairo	Completed training course Certificate	3	2	5	5	5
Uganda Study Tour	18 th – 22 ^{sd} July 2010	N/A	Uganda	-	19	5	24	24	24
Workshop on the 2011 Survey on Monitoring Paris Declaration	2 ^{sd} – 3 rd November 2010	Hosted by OECD/ UNDP	Tunisia	-	1	1	2	2	2
M & E Workshop (Two Groups)	27 th September – 4 th October 2011	Hosted by UNDP M&E Consultant /MIC	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	17	24	41	35	35
M& E workshop	25 th January- 3 rd February 2011	Hosted by MIC/ National Consultant (Tokten)	Sudan - Khartoum	Completed training course Certificate	13	15	28	19	19

ANNEX 4: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Planned Outputs	Results to Date
Objective 1: build the government-donor aid information and communication system.	
Output 1.1: National institutions run a comprehensive, transparent and coherent aid information and monitoring system based on records and results of planned and ongoing assistance projects and aid flows.	<p>The Sudan Aid Information Database (SAID) has been established, run by the MIC's AMCU. Initially planned and designed by project staff, it has now been handed over to the Ministry, who are responsible for updating and hosting the site.</p> <p>However, the ambition of SAID to become a one-stop-shop aid information database has not been met, as information about humanitarian aid and concessionary loans remains in separate information silos run by MHA and MOFNE respectively.</p> <p>The capacity of the MIC (especially AMCU and the M&E department) has been built, through the provision of computers, vehicles and training. Focal points in other federal Ministries, and in a number of aid-intensive states, have also been supported with material and training assistance.</p>
Output 1.2: A well informed government-led consultative group structure exists to facilitate regular and transparent coordination and strategic decision-making among national and foreign aid partners.	<p>Progress has been stalled since Sudan withdrew from the Cotonou process in June 2009.</p> <p>Government management of aid information is still fragmented between three federal ministries, and between Khartoum and the States. There is no established coherent functional consultative group with donors.</p>
Objective 2: integrate aid planning and decision-making processes within a sound national resource management system.	
Output 2.1: aid projects are recorded "on-budget" and some assistance goes "through-budget" to support national planning and budgeting processes	<p>This output has disappeared in the long grass of inter-Ministry jealousies and Govt-donor suspicions.</p> <p>A renewed effort will be made in March 2011 at a planned coordination meeting promoted by MIC, with the objective of encouraging the Govt to restructure aid management and coordination. Donors and Ministries are to be invited. Uncertain if this attempt will have any more success than previous efforts.</p>
Output 2.2: the MDG-based I-PRSP is developed and clearly articulated to the JAM Framework	No I-PRSP has been developed.

Output 2.3: Plan of Action developed by governmental and foreign aid partners to put into practice the principles of the Paris Declaration on aid-effectiveness	Sudan joined the Paris Declaration process in 2006, and its submission of a report to the Accra High Level Forum in 2008 was a high-tide mark of its engagement with the process. Since the ICC indictment in 2009 there has been no progress, and no Plan of Action has been produced. Nevertheless, input for Sudan's report to the 2011 Busan HLF has been collected.
Output 2.4: The Government formulates a first aid policy that includes a regulatory and legal framework to guide and facilitate humanitarian and development partners' strategies and operation.	An Aid Strategy consultant has been recruited, and has completed the first part of his consultancy.