



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2018/038

Audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

The Mission was not adequately prepared to ensure the continuity of important and time-critical business processes following a disruptive event

10 May 2018

Assignment No. AP2017/634/02

Audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The objective of the audit was to assess whether the Mission had established and implemented adequate and effective procedures to ensure continuity of its critical business processes and services following disruptive events. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 November 2017 and included governance structure and strategy; risk assessment, business impact analysis and mitigating measures; and the maintenance, exercise and review of the business continuity plan.

UNAMID was not adequately prepared to ensure the continuity of important and time-critical business processes following a disruptive event. The Mission needed to identify critical functions and revise its business continuity plan; conduct risk assessment and business impact analysis; and test the business continuity plan for validity and train staff responsible for business continuity activities.

OIOS made five recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, UNAMID needed to:

- Implement a functioning governance structure to make strategic decisions related to business continuity plan, including essential time-critical business services, and to ensure that the plan is regularly tested and updated;
- Identify the time-critical business processes and maximum tolerable periods of disruption, and update its business continuity plan and annexes to ensure that the Mission is adequately prepared to face disruptive events;
- Conduct and document a comprehensive business continuity risk assessment and business impact analysis, including recovery time objectives, and develop mitigating strategies to support the critical business processes built in its revised business continuity plan;
- Regularly test its business continuity plan and update it based on lessons learned to ensure it remains current; and
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns on business continuity and emergency management plans and procedures, and take action to ensure those responsible for critical business processes and business continuity focal points have been adequately trained.

UNAMID accepted the recommendations and has yet to initiate action to implement them.

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Audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).
2. Business continuity management is a holistic management process intended to strengthen an organization's ability to respond to risks and continue critical business processes following disruptive events. In June 2013, the General Assembly approved the Organizational Resilience Management System (ORMS) under A/RES/67/254 mandating all United Nations entities to implement, exercise and maintain resilience by aligning and harmonizing preparedness efforts to enhance the Organization's ability to continuously deliver its mandates.
3. Business continuity is one of the core elements of ORMS, the emergency management framework of the United Nations. Other core elements of ORMS include crisis management, security, information technology disaster recovery, medical casualty incident response (pandemic and mass casualty incident response), crisis communications and support to staff survivors and families. These elements are all interlinked and constitute the framework for crisis response, recovery, reconstitution and return to usual business. UNAMID developed a business continuity plan (BCP) in May 2011.
4. The UNAMID Chief of Staff, in collaboration with the Director of Mission Support, is responsible for maintaining the BCP. The UNAMID Crisis Management Team (CMT), chaired by the Joint Special Representative (JSR) and comprising key leaders from the substantive, support, military and police components and the Deputy JSR, is responsible for taking the lead on all issues relating to business continuity during crisis and disruption of services.
5. Comments provided by UNAMID are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The objective of the audit was to assess whether the Mission had established and implemented adequate and effective procedures to ensure continuity of its critical business processes and services following disruptive events.
7. This audit was included in the 2017 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to operational and reputational risks related to the inability of the Mission to continue operations at defined levels and periods following a disruptive event.
8. OIOS conducted this audit from August to November 2017. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 November 2017. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risk areas in UNAMID business continuity management, which included: governance structure and strategy; risk assessment, business impact analysis and mitigating measures; and the maintenance, exercise and review of the BCP.
9. The audit methodology included interviews of key personnel, review of relevant documentation and analytical review of data.

10. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Governance and strategy

The Mission was not regularly meeting to make strategic and operational decisions on its business continuity plan

11. The Secretary-General's report on ORMS (A/67/266) requires UNAMID to establish a two-tier governance structure comprising a high-level body and operational team to make strategic decisions and coordinate responses.

12. In 2011, UNAMID established a two-tier governance structure: a CMT, which comprised the JSR and senior leadership from the substantive, support, military and police components, responsible for making strategic decisions regarding the BCP and its activation; and a crisis management working group responsible for coordinating the Mission's response to a crisis.

13. However, the CMT and the working group had not met since their establishment in 2011, with UNAMID explaining that there had not been any crisis during the period. The lack of a functioning governance structure for the overall management of business continuity and for discussing issues both at the strategic and operational levels resulted in UNAMID not having a reliable or current BCP. For instance, UNAMID had not updated the BCP since its development in 2011, which was prior to the introduction of ORMS in 2015. Therefore its 2011 BCP was not supported by risk assessment and business impact analysis, which were the basis for identifying critical business processes, and did not include maximum tolerable periods of disruption. The 2011 BCP had also not been recently tested to validate and update it, except for the testing of the information technology disaster recovery plan (ITDRP) at the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe (RSCE).

14. As a result, UNAMID was not adequately prepared to ensure the continuity of important and critical business processes in a timely manner following a crisis/disruptive event.

(1) UNAMID should implement a functioning governance structure to make strategic decisions related to its business continuity plan and to ensure that the plan includes all essential time-critical business services and is regularly tested and updated as necessary.

UNAMID accepted recommendation 1 and stated that it would ensure that the established two-tier governance structure was operational in order to take BCP-related decisions. UNAMID added that it would conduct an annual review of the BCP; conduct exercises and tests of the BCP regularly; and continue to update the BCP as needed to ensure that it remained current and covered all the Mission's essential time-critical business services and processes. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of evidence of the functioning of the two-tier governance structure.

B. Business continuity and recovery plan

Need to update the Mission's business continuity plan

15. The ORMS Policy, promulgated in August 2015, requires UNAMID to develop a mission-wide BCP by June 2016. The United Nations Business Continuity Management Policy describes the BCP as a living document that follows an all-hazards approach and outlines critical business processes and staff and recovery procedures. The Department of Management's BCP template requires UNAMID senior management to: define its essential and time-critical business services; and set the maximum tolerable period for disruption for resuming critical services following a disruptive event.

16. UNAMID had not revised its BCP since the promulgation of ORMS, with its current BCP developed in 2011. The Mission's former management had delegated the identification and classification of time-critical services and related business processes to section/unit heads. However, due to lack of direction from leadership, as mentioned above, most section/unit heads had not updated their time-critical services and related business processes since identifying them in 2011. Therefore, the Mission did not have an up-to-date BCP that incorporated the additional requirements introduced by ORMS, and to reflect changes since 2011 in its operating environment, processes, information systems, partnerships and supply chain.

17. A review of the 2011 BCP, including 93 critical business processes under various sections/offices and related annexes, noted that important information was absent and/or outdated. For example, critical business processes related to fuel, water and rations reserves were missing and a process like Communication and Public Information Section maintaining 24/7 nationwide public radio service which had never been operational were included. Furthermore, non-critical business processes were included in the BCP such as: managing United Nations Volunteers time and attendance and personnel data; recording of financial transactions and managing the budget implementation and monitoring process by the Budget and Finance Section; and maintaining database of all prisoners in custody by the Rule of Law Section. While the Geospatial Information and Telecommunications Technology Section (GITTS) and the Safety and Security Section had conducted a separate risk assessment and identified mitigating actions, the results were not part of a comprehensive revision of the Mission's BCP.

18. The BCP was not updated because management did not pay attention to revising the plan. In 2017, the Office of the Chief of Staff initiated its revision; however, there was no target completion date and no one was assigned such responsibility. Without an updated BCP, UNAMID was not adequately prepared to resume critical business processes in a timely manner.

(2) UNAMID should identify its time-critical business processes and the maximum tolerable periods of disruption, and subsequently update its business continuity plan and related annexes to ensure that it is adequately prepared to continue time-critical business processes following a disruptive event.

UNAMID accepted recommendation 2 and stated that it would: update the BCP and its annexes by 31 July 2018; ensure that section/unit heads identified the Mission's time-critical business processes and services; and assess the maximum tolerable periods of disruption. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of the updated BCP and the identification of the Mission's time-critical business processes and services and maximum tolerable periods of disruption.

C. Risk assessment, business impact analysis and mitigating strategies

Need to conduct risk assessment and business impact analysis

19. The United Nations Policy on Business Continuity Management requires UNAMID to conduct a risk assessment and business impact analysis to support the identification of critical business processes and take these into consideration when developing the Mission's BCP. The policy also requires UNAMID to develop recovery/mitigation strategies to respond to identified risks.

20. Although critical business processes were identified in the 2011 BCP, they were not supported by a documented risk assessment showing how disruption of these processes could potentially impact the Mission's operations. At the time of the audit, only GITTS and the Safety and Security Section had conducted risks assessment and business impact analysis for their respective processes. The GITTS risk assessment identified critical business processes and a recovery strategy pertaining to the disruption of services they provided, and the Safety and Security Section risk assessment focused on safety and security risk that could impact operations.

21. Additionally, although the Mission was in the process of updating the 2011 BCP, there was no evidence that a comprehensive risk assessment and business impact analysis were being conducted as part of the process. Mitigation strategies (except in the cases of GITTS and the Safety and Security Section as noted above) and recovery time objectives (RTOs)¹ to ensure continuity of critical functions were also not defined. This resulted due to the lack of management attention to its BCP, including assigning dedicated staff with the requisite knowledge to lead the process. In the absence of a comprehensive risk assessment, a business impact analysis and identification of mitigating measures, including RTOs, UNAMID was not adequately prepared to resume critical services and related processes following a disruptive event.

(3) UNAMID should conduct and document a comprehensive business continuity risk assessment and a business impact analysis, including recovery time objectives, and develop mitigating strategies to support the critical business processes built in its revised business continuity plan.

UNAMID accepted recommendation 3 and stated that it would: conduct and document a comprehensive business continuity risk assessment and business impact analysis; define RTOs; and identify mitigating strategies to support the critical business processes as part of its update of the Mission's BCP. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of the comprehensive business continuity risk assessment and business impact analysis, including RTOs and mitigating strategies.

D. Maintenance, exercise and review of business continuity plan

Need to test the business continuity plan and establish mechanisms so that it remains current

22. The United Nations Policy on Business Continuity requires UNAMID to test the BCP to validate policies, procedures and systems against established standards and update the plan to reflect lessons learned.

23. In April 2016 and October 2017, the Mission tested its ITDRP at the RSCE to validate the adequacy of the plan and the Mission's readiness to address disruptive events to the information communication technology infrastructure and related services. The test concluded that RSCE was adequately prepared for

¹ The period within which minimum levels of services and/or products and supporting systems, applications or functions must be recovered after a disruption has occurred.

a disruptive event and had satisfactory information and technology disaster strategies in place. However, due to inadequate attention by management, UNAMID had not prepared after-action reports with lessons learned to update the plan. UNAMID had also not determined RTOs and target recovery point objectives² for its Information Communication and Technology (ICT) systems.

24. However, these exercises were solely focused on the recovery of critical ICT infrastructure and to validate the ICT disaster recovery strategies and not on the recovery of critical business processes. Also, out of the 53 Mission sections/components, only 13 participated in the ITDRP exercise in April 2016, while 9 participated in the October 2017 exercise. There was no indication to show how the staff were selected to participate in these exercises. The limited number of participants was because the Mission did not provide a budget for the testing of the ITDRP.

25. Overall, however, the Mission had not tested its 2011 mission-wide BCP to validate and update it to ensure all time-critical business processes had been identified and adequate continuity strategies had been developed including RTOs. Also, a review of staff (principals and alternates) to perform critical business processes in the 2011 BCP showed that most of them had left the Mission even though there was a requirement to update the list of critical staff and their contacts each month. As a result, there was a high risk that UNAMID would not be able to resume critical business processes in a timely manner following a disruptive event.

(4) UNAMID should regularly test its business continuity plan and update it based on lessons learned to ensure it remains current.

UNAMID accepted recommendation 4 and stated that it would: periodically test its BCP to assess the effectiveness of its plans and procedures to ensure that they remained current; prepare after-action report and make necessary changes to the BCP. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence that the BCP has been tested and lessons learned are captured and used to update the BCP.

Need to train staff and raise awareness on the business continuity plan

26. The ORMS policy requires UNAMID to: ensure that staff and management are aware of emergency management plans and procedures; and staff responsible for time-critical functions are adequately trained; identify staff members (principals and alternates) to perform critical business processes in the event of a disruption; and update the list of critical staff names and contacts each month.

27. There was no evidence that all staff and management were made aware of business continuity arrangements and emergency management plans and procedures; and that crisis managers and staff responsible for time-critical functions were trained and familiarized on the decision-making process. This occurred because the Mission's management did not monitor the requirement to update the list of staff responsible for business continuity activities, provide the required training and undertake campaigns on business continuity and emergency management plans and procedures.

(5) UNAMID should conduct awareness-raising campaigns on business continuity and emergency management plans and procedures, and take action to ensure those responsible for critical business processes and business continuity focal points have been adequately trained.

² The point in time at which data must be recovered after a disruption has occurred.

UNAMID accepted recommendation 5 and stated it would: conduct mandatory awareness-raising campaigns on BCP and emergency management plans and procedures; and update the list of those responsible for critical business processes and ensure that they were trained and had expertise to support implementation, maintenance and recovery of critical processes. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of evidence that awareness-raising campaigns have been conducted and that all staff responsible for critical business processes have been trained.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

28. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of UNAMID for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

(Signed) Eleanor T. Burns
Director, Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
1	UNAMID should implement a functioning governance structure to make strategic decisions related to its business continuity plan and to ensure that the plan includes all essential time-critical business services and is regularly tested and updated as necessary.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of the functioning of the two-tier governance structure.	31 July 2018
2	UNAMID should identify its time-critical business processes and the maximum tolerable periods of disruption, and subsequently update its business continuity plan and related annexes to ensure that it is adequately prepared to continue time-critical business processes following a disruptive event.	Important	O	Receipt of the updated BCP and the identification of the Mission's time-critical business processes and services and maximum tolerable periods of disruption.	31 July 2018
3	UNAMID should conduct and document a comprehensive business continuity risk assessment and a business impact analysis, including recovery time objectives, and develop mitigating strategies to support the critical business processes built in its revised business continuity plan.	Important	O	Receipt of the comprehensive business continuity risk assessment and business impact analysis, including RTOs and mitigating strategies	30 June 2018
4	UNAMID should regularly test its business continuity plan and update it based on lessons learned to ensure it remains current.	Important	O	Remains open pending receipt of evidence that the BCP has been tested and lessons learned are captured and used to update the BCP.	30 June 2019
5	UNAMID should conduct awareness-raising campaigns on business continuity and emergency management plans and procedures, and take action to ensure those responsible for critical business processes and business continuity focal points have been adequately trained.	Important	O	Remains open pending receipt of evidence that awareness-raising campaigns have been conducted and that all staff responsible for critical business processes have been trained.	30 August 2018

¹ Critical recommendations address critical and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided with regard to the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

² Important recommendations address important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

³ C = closed, O = open

⁴ Date provided by UNAMID in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNAMID



UNITED NATIONS

الأمم المتحدة

African Union – United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Office of the Joint Special Representative

7 May 2018

To: Mr. Arnold Valdez, Officer-in-Charge
Peacekeeping Audit Service
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

From: Jeremiah Kingsley Mamabolo
Joint Special Representative

Subject: **Draft report on an audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (Assignment No. AP2017/634/02)**

1. With reference to your memorandum of 22 April 2018, on the captioned-subject, please find attached UNAMID response (Appendix I) to the draft report for your consideration.

Thank you.

cc: Mr. Luke Mhlaba, Chief of Staff, UNAMID
Ms. Victoria Browning, Director, Mission Support Division, UNAMID
Mr. Lamin Demba, Chief, Geospatial Information and Telecommunication Technology, UNAMID
Ms. Florence Ndungu, Senior Administrative Officer, ODMS, UNAMID
Ms. Dorothy Choto, Audit Focal Point, UNAMID
Mr. Alexandre Etocke, Chief Resident Auditor, Internal Audit Division, OIOS, UNAMID
Ms. Cynthia Avena-Castillo, Professional Practices Section, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Management Response

Audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ₂	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	UNAMID should implement a functioning governance structure to make strategic decisions related to business continuity planning and to ensure that the plan includes all essential time-critical business services, and is regularly tested and updated as necessary.	Important	Yes	Mission Chief of Staff Director of Mission Support	31 July 2018	UNAMID will ensure that the established two-tier governance structure consisting of: (a) a crisis management team comprised of the Joint Special Representative and the senior leadership from the substantive, support, military and police components; and (b) a crisis management working group is operational and decisions on the business continuity plan (BCP) are made at the strategic and operational levels. UNAMID will also conduct an annual review of the BCP as well as regular exercises and tests of the BCP. UNAMID will also continue to update the BCP as needed to ensure that it remains current and reflects all of the Mission's essential time-critical business services and processes.

¹ Critical recommendations address critical and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided with regard to the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

² Important recommendations address important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

Management Response

Audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ₂	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
2	UNAMID should identify its time-critical business processes and the maximum tolerable periods of disruption, and subsequently update its business continuity plan and related annexes to ensure that it is adequately prepared to continue time-critical business processes following a disruptive event.	Important	Yes	Mission Chief of Staff Director of Mission Support	31 July 2018	UNAMID will revise and develop an updated BCP, including annexes, by 31 July 2018 and ensure that heads of section/units identify the Mission's time-critical business processes and services; including assessing the maximum tolerable periods of disruption.
3	UNAMID should conduct and document a comprehensive business continuity risk assessment and a business impact analysis, including recovery time objectives, and develop mitigation strategies to support the critical business processes built in its revised business continuity plan.	Important	Yes	Mission Chief of Staff Director of Mission Support	30 June 2018	UNAMID will conduct and document a comprehensive business continuity risk assessment and business impact analysis; define recovery time objectives and identify the mitigation strategies to support critical business processes and services and develop mitigation strategies to support the critical business processes as a part of its update of the Mission's BCP.
4	UNAMID should regularly test its business continuity plan and update it based on lessons learned to ensure it remains current.	Important	Yes	Mission Chief of Staff Director of Mission Support	30 June 2019	The Mission will periodically test its BCP on the effectiveness of its plans and procedures to ensure that it remains current. An after-action report will be prepared and necessary changes will be made and implemented.

Management Response

Audit of business continuity in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ₂	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
5	UNAMID should conduct awareness-raising campaigns on business continuity and emergency management plans and procedures, and take action to ensure those responsible for critical business processes and business continuity focal points have been adequately trained.	Important	Yes	Mission Chief of Staff Director of Mission Support	30 August 2018	UNAMID will conduct mandatory awareness raising campaigns on BCP and emergency management plans and procedures to ensure awareness of emergency management plans and procedures. It will also update the list of those responsible for critical business processes and ensure that they are trained and have expertise to support implementation, maintenance and, if required, recovery of critical processes.