



General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 March 2021

Original: English

Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 151

Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Evaluation of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur in supporting transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur in collaboration with United Nations country team

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

From February 2019 to February 2020, the Inspection and Evaluation Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services conducted a real-time evaluation of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in supporting the transition in Darfur from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, in collaboration with the United Nations country team. That evaluation involved the use of a combination of semi-structured interviews, document review, electronic survey, direct observations and case study in two phases.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services team engaged with all relevant stakeholders, including United Nations Headquarters, UNAMID, the country team, the African Union, the Government of the Sudan, local communities and civil society organizations. An advisory memorandum was issued in October 2019 to transition managers after phase one of the evaluation, as a result of the real-time evaluation, to aid in the timely recalibration and strengthening of transition planning and implementation. Although the transition was repeatedly disrupted owing to political upheavals, social disharmony and security incidents, as well as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, UNAMID was able to steer the mandated activities efficiently within the constraints.

The results of the second phase of the evaluation indicated that UNAMID had made significant progress in transition implementation, drawdown and preparation for exit, and that its activities were relevant and aligned with the mandate and directives. The political transition in the Sudan presented both disruptions and opportunities for transition in Darfur. In the aftermath of the change of Government in the Sudan, the



strategic needs and priorities of key stakeholders, which were initially divergent, converged around the exit of UNAMID, a follow-on presence and peacebuilding needs. However, the limited availability of consolidated lessons learned and best practices from previous transitions affected application at the operational and functional levels.

Several challenges emerged. UNAMID and the country team struggled to streamline planning, coordination and integration owing to various factors. First, transition leadership appeared fragmented in a non-integrated and geographically dispersed setting, which was compounded by shifting institutional priorities, a lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities and limited ownership of transition objectives. Second, the joint planning and coordination mechanisms for the transition were not effective, owing to late engagement with the Government of the Sudan, inadequate working-level linkages at the operational level and the lack of formal structured coordination in the field. Third, the State liaison functions, envisaged as a joint vehicle of UNAMID and the country team for transition, made progress and generally met the stated objectives in the State liaison functions concept.

To advance the transition objectives, UNAMID secured support from the African Union at the strategic level but recognized the need for the African Union to play a larger role at the operational level. Similarly, in the aftermath of the political transition in the Sudan, UNAMID also secured increased national engagement, commitment and ownership for effective transition in Darfur.

For the longer-term, UNAMID and the country team endeavoured to address conflict drivers, but significant risk of relapse into conflict remained. This existed due to the unaddressed root causes of conflict, protracted humanitarian and protection needs, the destabilizing activities of paramilitary forces and armed groups, the prevalence of a high number of illicit weapons among communities and an unfinished peace process. While UNAMID identified and endeavoured to address reputational risks, the internal asset management, the misuse and misappropriation of team sites and assets handed over to government entities, the vulnerability of remaining team sites to looting and criminal activities, the potential negative environmental fallout and the risks related to serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse, remained major concerns.

Some key factors contributed to, or constrained, the effectiveness and efficiency of transition in Darfur. The peacebuilding aspect of the transition was delayed owing to political uncertainties, the prevalent security situation, a lack of donor support and internal eligibility processing issues. In addition, persisting systemic issues affected transition planning and implementation. The human resources drawdown and the low morale of staff had a significant impact on transition implementation. While the backstopping support provided by United Nations Headquarters was found adequate, the support that the United Nations Development Coordination Office provided to the Resident Coordinator Office was found to be insufficient.

In total, 13 recommendations (1 critical and 12 important) were made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the transition in Darfur.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	4
II. Background	4
III. Methodology	5
IV. Evaluation results	5
A. Activities of UNAMID in support of transition were relevant and aligned with the mandate and directives	5
B. UNAMID and the United Nations country team did not fully achieve coherent and streamlined planning, coordination and integration	9
C. UNAMID and the United Nations country team endeavoured to address conflict drivers, but significant risks of relapse into conflict remained	15
D. UNAMID identified and endeavoured to address reputational risks	17
E. Key factors contributed to or constrained the effectiveness and efficiency of transition in Darfur	19
V. Conclusion	22
VI. Recommendations	23
 <i>Annexes</i>	
I. Timeline of major events that affected political transition in the Sudan and the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur	26
II. Management response	28
III. Office of Internal Oversight Services response to formal comments from the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, UNAMID and the United Nations country team	32

I. Introduction

1. The objective of the evaluation was to determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in supporting transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur in collaboration with the United Nations country team. The evaluation was conducted in conformity with norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations system.¹

2. Comments from relevant Secretariat entities were sought on the draft report and considered in the final report. The formal management responses are contained in annex II to the present report.

II. Background

3. Based upon an overall improvement in security in Darfur, the Security Council in its resolutions 2363 (2017) and 2429 (2018) endorsed a two-pronged and a whole-of-system approach for UNAMID that combined peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks to be implemented in collaboration with the country team through State liaison functions over a two-year time frame.

4. In his planning directives for the development of consistent and coherent United Nations transition processes and for the planning and preparation of UNAMID, the Secretary-General outlined an operational framework for a better transition in Darfur and across the system, including roles, responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, reporting and staffing. The Deputy Joint Special Representative of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, on behalf of the Joint Special Representative of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator were designated as the leads at the country level to plan and manage the transition.

5. Transition in Darfur happened against the backdrop of significant political upheavals from December 2018 to October 2019, including social unrest, the ousting of the 30-year-old former regime and takeover by a transitional military council, attacks against and killings of civilians, the establishment of a sovereign council and the ensued peace negotiations in Juba.

6. The political transition and security situation in the country slowed and at times disrupted the transition process in Darfur (see annex I to the present report for a major timeline of events and their impact on transition). During that period, the structured engagement with the Government of the Sudan at the national and state levels in Darfur waned, the implementation of State liaison functions programmes was delayed, the development of peacebuilding programmes and the Darfur Development Strategy refresher was hampered, the focus of the country team shifted from transition in Darfur to political transition across the Sudan, the drawdown of military and police peacekeepers was paused, the closure and handover of team sites was suspended, the exit of UNAMID was twice extended and the need for a follow-on presence had become apparent. The technical rollover of the UNAMID mandate in June and October 2019 and April 2020 further complicated transition planning and implementation to a large extent.

7. On the other hand, the establishment of a civilian-led transitional Government heralded opportunities to advance the comprehensive and inclusive peace process and transition, with a focus on all of the Sudan. UNAMID and the country team reported a significant improvement in the relationship with and responsiveness of the

¹ Available from <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914>.

Government of the Sudan. This included the enhanced accessibility of UNAMID and the country team leadership to the top leadership of the transitional Government, the increased commitment and responsiveness of the Government's state and local authorities to transition requirements, and speedier customs clearances for incoming or outgoing UNAMID freight. In addition, the ongoing peace negotiations in Juba envisaged addressing the root causes of conflict, especially in Darfur, providing a bridgehead for sustainable peace and development in the Sudan.

III. Methodology

8. The evaluation utilized four data collection methods – semi-structured interviews, document review, electronic survey and direct observations – in two phases. The evaluation covered the period from 2014 to 2020. The first round of data collection was undertaken from May to July 2019, and its findings were shared in an advisory memo with the transition managers in October 2019. The second data collection phase was from December 2019 to February 2020.

IV. Evaluation results

A. Activities of UNAMID in support of transition were relevant and aligned with the mandate and directives

1. Significant progress in transition implementation, drawdown and preparation for exit

9. UNAMID succeeded in aligning most of its structures and activities with the resolutions and planning directives of the Security Council. UNAMID and the country team, in collaboration with key stakeholders, used several internal and joint mechanisms to plan, coordinate and implement the transition-related substantive and support activities (see table 1).

Table 1
Coordination mechanisms used to plan and implement transition activities

<i>Entity</i>	<i>Strategic level</i>	<i>Operational level</i>
Joint	Tripartite African Union-Government of the Sudan-United Nations mechanism (joint working group) and joint task force with the African Union Joint Technical Coordination Committee (“5+5 committee”) Bimonthly meetings between UNAMID and the country team	Joint transition cell
UNAMID	UNAMID transition and drawdown steering committee	Integrated planning team: Administrative drawdown team Asset downsizing task force Mission headquarters negotiation group

Entity	Strategic level	Operational level
United Nations country team		Sector technical committees
		Advisory group on the disposal of assets by gifting
		Environmental clearance group
	Operations management team	State liaison functions pillar conveners
	Programme management team	Peacebuilding coordination
	United Nations Communications Group	Darfur Development Strategy refresher coordination

10. Coupled with effective internal communication, the mechanisms contributed to advancing a common understanding among managers and staff about the major aspects of transition (see figure I) and the roles and responsibilities at the working level (see figure II). Periodic staff town-hall meetings and broadcasts were held, which 76 per cent of survey respondents found effective. Externally, the Mission organized community events to raise the awareness of Darfur communities of the transition timeline and activities.

Figure I
Familiarity of UNAMID and country team staff with major aspects of transition

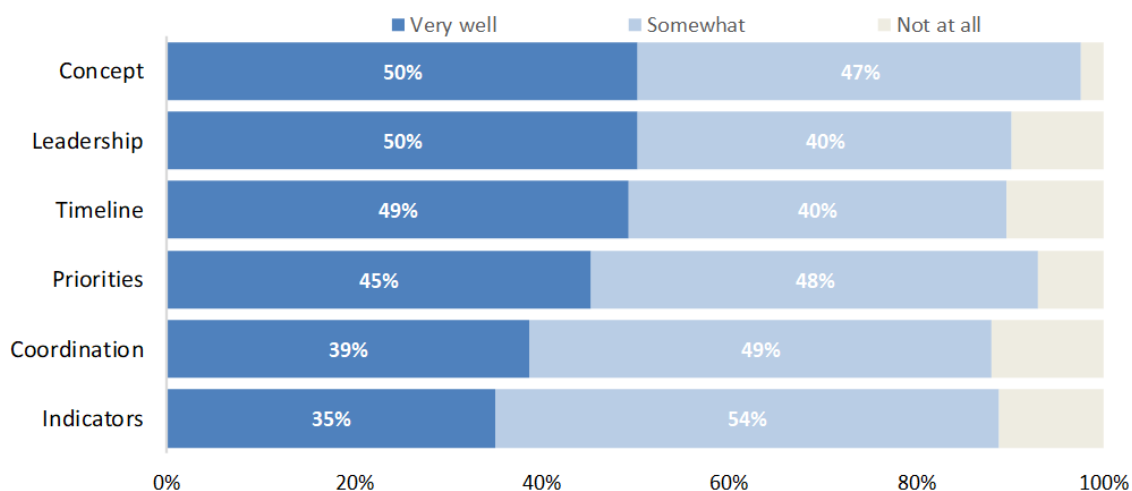
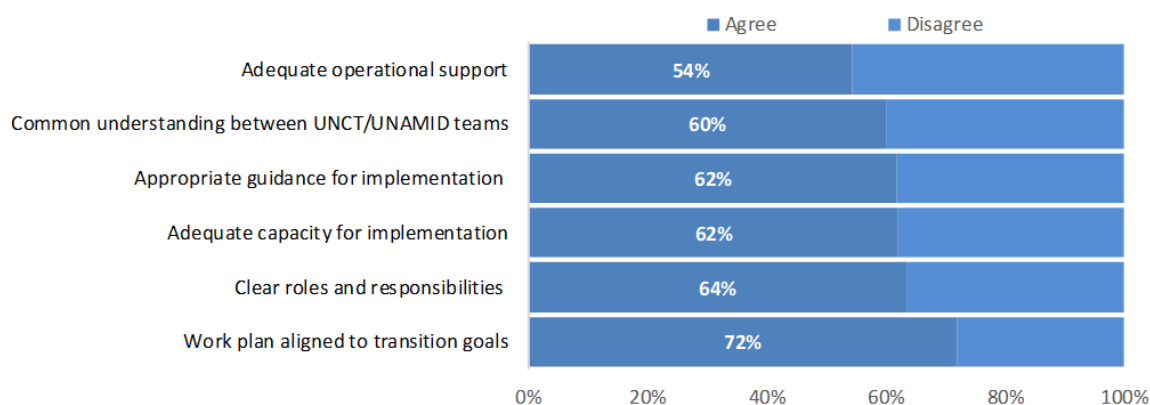


Figure II
Views of UNAMID and country team staff to clarity and common understanding achieved at the working level



11. UNAMID effectively implemented major transition activities (see table 2). A review of UNAMID plans for drawdown, closure and liquidation indicated readiness for the exit scheduled for 31 December 2020.

Table 2
Summary of UNAMID progress in transition implementation, drawdown and preparation for exit

<i>Main transition activities</i>	<i>Status of implementation</i>
Reconfiguration of a new mission structure	Office of the Joint Special Representative relocated to Khartoum
	New Mission headquarters established in Zalingei and Office of the Deputy Office of the Joint Special Representative relocated
	Temporary operating base established in Golo
	Reduced area of peacekeeping operation to Central Darfur
Establishment and implementation of state liaison functions	State liaison functions established in East, West, North and South Darfur
	Up to 90 UNAMID civilian staff and individual police officers deployed in nine agencies, funds and programmes or co-located with Sudanese Police Force
	State liaison functions 1 and 2 programmes being implemented
Human resources drawdown	Approximately 59 per cent reduction in military, 47 per cent reduction in police, 72 per cent reduction in national personnel and 57 per cent reduction in international personnel during the period 2014–2019
	Drawdown plans prepared for remaining uniformed and civilian staff
Closure and liquidation	25 team sites and 3 sector headquarters closed during the period 2017–2019
	Assets worth over \$75 million and 28 operating bases worth \$126 million handed over to the Government of the Sudan until 2019
	Plans prepared for security and handover of remaining 14 team sites, including mission headquarters and logistics base

<i>Main transition activities</i>	<i>Status of implementation</i>
Support to peace negotiations and start-up of follow-on presence	Provision of logistical, technical and advisory support to the Juba peace process
Women, peace and security interventions	<p>Women mediation and protection networks established in internally displaced persons camps, as well as return and affected areas</p> <p>Darfur-wide open consultations to consolidate and represent women's concerns in peace talks</p> <p>Sudan network for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse joint framework for action established</p>

2. Strategic needs and priorities of key stakeholders converged over time

12. The relevance and progress of UNAMID transition activities in Darfur was affected by the multiplicity and different viewpoints among key stakeholders. Initially, the consensus among Security Council members, the African Union and the Government of the Sudan on the timing, phasing and scope of the transition was not fully evident. Views on the correct timing of the transition were mixed, with 60 per cent of the respondents to the UNAMID and country team survey and 26 per cent of interviewees believing that it was not the right time for transition in Darfur. That sentiment was also shared and emphasized by the representatives of internally displaced persons interviewed, who demanded a rethinking of the transition decision because of protection and humanitarian concerns. Although the conflict trends in Darfur supported the decision to move from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, interviewees from United Nations Headquarters believed there was internal resistance to transition within UNAMID. In total, 29 per cent of Headquarters managers asserted that the late internalization of the transition decision in the field had delayed transition-specific planning, as evidenced by the reconfiguration of the mission structure, endorsement of a transition concept and establishment of State liaison functions by February 2019.

13. However, in the aftermath of the political transition, those differences in opinions were largely levelled, and stakeholders converged around exit plans and the need for a follow-on presence with a focus on peacebuilding activities.

3. Limited availability of consolidated lessons learned and best practices from previous transitions impacted application

14. The application of lessons learned and best practices from previous transitions was confined to the strategic level, despite the expectation from the Executive Committee to create a culture of organizational learning and improve transition processes for the entire United Nations system at all levels. United Nations Headquarters had not systematically collated, reviewed, documented and disseminated transition lessons and best practices to be applied by UNAMID. The joint transition project shared some specific lessons only with the transition leadership, which did not permeate effectively through the functional level. UNAMID also reached out to the leadership team that had handled transition in Liberia to obtain insights on their experiences. However, 70 per cent of the survey respondents did not believe there were, and were aware of, any lessons learned or best practices being applied to the case of Darfur. That suggested an insufficient transmission of lessons learned and best practices to the field level.

B. UNAMID and the United Nations country team did not fully achieve coherent and streamlined planning, coordination and integration

15. UNAMID and the country team struggled to achieve coherence while jointly planning and implementing the transition priorities, including with key actors (Government of the Sudan and African Union) due to several factors.

1. Transition leadership within and among UNAMID and the country team was fragmented

16. The transition leadership within and across UNAMID and the country team appeared divided in their roles and responsibilities, failing to form and sustain unity and cohesion around transition. In total, 72 per cent of the staff and managers interviewed pointed to three layers of fragmentation.

17. First, fragmentation among UNAMID top leadership was attributed to two factors. The primary factor was the lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities for transition management among the Office of the Joint Special Representative, the Office of the Deputy Joint Special Representative and other senior mission leadership, because reporting lines among substantive and support functions were not properly aligned with the responsibilities outlined in Secretary-General's planning directive for the planning and preparation of UNAMID. Another factor was the geographical reconfiguration of the mission structure under Security Council resolution [2363 \(2017\)](#) and in the Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur ([S/2017/437](#)), which delineated the peacekeeping and peacebuilding areas in Darfur and specified that UNAMID would need to focus on the greater Jebel Marra area. With the Office of the Joint Special Representative, the Office of the Deputy Joint Special Representative and the mission support division located in Khartoum, Zalingei and El Fasher, respectively, effective and timely communications and coordination among key actors was believed to be compromised. Aside from costing an estimated \$7.5 million, the reconfiguration also increased travel time and costs across sites, thereby complicating the scheduling of important conversations around transition.

18. The second layer of fragmentation was within the country team, which more than half of the stakeholders considered not to have fully owned the transition objectives. In total, 64 per cent of the Resident Coordinator Office and country team interviewees expressed confusion about the rationale for the presence in Darfur of the country team only, and confirmed their initial reservations about collaborating with UNAMID. In addition, 87 per cent of UNAMID managers acknowledged the difficulty in achieving the necessary change in mindset of the country team to adapt to transition requirements and attributed their lack of buy-in to an increasing emphasis on political transition across the Sudan, over transition in Darfur.² Agencies, funds and programmes (8 out of 10 participating agencies) believed the time and effort dedicated to transition planning in Darfur was disproportionate to their programmes across the Sudan, whereas UNAMID interviewees believed the success of transition across the Sudan depended on that of the Darfur transition.

19. The lack of effectiveness of the Resident Coordinator Office in unifying agencies, funds and programmes around transition objectives was considered to widen this fragmentation and attributed to the United Nations Development Reform which altered management, oversight and accountability lines and responsibilities within the country operations of the country team. The responsibility to jointly

² UNAMID communication about the country team's shifting focus and decreasing engagement in transition planning and management in Darfur.

manage the transition with the Office of the Deputy Joint Special Representative during this reform limited the capacity of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator to effectively coordinate agencies, funds and programmes. Some Resident Coordinator Office posts were not filled in a timely manner to cohere transition activities related to State liaison functions and peacebuilding programmes since the resources and clarity of the process were not made available until mid-2019. The work of the Resident Coordinator Office on transition was supported by a UNAMID-loaned staff and a transition specialist provided by the Transition Project.

20. The last layer of fragmentation occurred between the two transition managers at UNAMID and the country team due to shifting institutional priorities generated by the overall political context and the potential for a follow-on United Nations mechanism across the Sudan. As a result, the country team's engagement in transition in Darfur reportedly decreased. The impact of fragmentation between UNAMID and the country team was evident in the suspension of bi-monthly coordination meetings between UNAMID and the country team from October 2019 to March 2020.

2. Established joint planning and coordination mechanisms for the transition in Darfur were not optimal

21. The gaps prevailing in joint planning and coordination mechanisms contributed to limited coherence in transition implementation.

22. **Strategic level:** Coordination with the Government of the Sudan at the strategic level was uneven, including due to the fluid political environment and changes in leadership at the Federal and State levels. UNAMID and the country team established the "5+5 committee"³ to review, monitor and discuss resource allocation to State liaison functions programmes. A review of the minutes of seven meetings and interviews with the Government indicated that the Government's priorities and needs – such as balancing capacity-building and infrastructure projects, the reintegration of ex-combatants, providing resources for herders and the opening of migratory routes – were not fully reflected in State liaison functions 1 and 2 programmes. The first committee meeting was organized after State liaison functions 1 programmes had already been approved. The Government's needs were reflected more in State liaison functions 2 programmes, as illustrated by the creation of an immediate service delivery pillar. In addition, UNAMID managers reported that the State liaison functions programmes had been identified in consultation with the state governors and local communities.

23. At the operational level, the joint transition cell – a primary transition coordination mechanism between UNAMID and the country team – was not sufficiently effective in cohering joint activities. The cell was mandated to provide oversight and monitoring for the joint transition action plan by facilitating and coordinating the implementation of joint transition priorities. However, 65 per cent of staff and managers cited factors that contributed to the cell's limited effectiveness, including underrepresentation of country team staff, a lack of clear working linkages with the coordination mechanisms of the country team and a lack of field coordination among agencies, funds and programmes in Darfur.

24. At the tactical level, coordination between UNAMID and the country team headquarters and State liaison functions locations in each Darfur state, as well as coordination among State liaison functions locations within each state, were not formalized and structured. In the absence of a coordinated approach to implementation, 59 per cent of State liaison functions staff feared efforts were duplicated and comparative advantages were not utilized.

³ The committee comprised five members from UNAMID and the country team and five from the Government.

3. UNAMID recognized the successful role of the African Union at the strategic level and the need for the African Union to play a larger role at the operational level

25. In its resolution 2429 (2018), the Security Council assigned the African Union only a strategic role, which African Union representatives believed was successfully fulfilled through the work of the tripartite mechanism, strategic assessment mission consultations and other diplomatic endeavours. For example, the African Union played a critical role in managing the political transition by suspending the Sudan from its activities until a civilian Government was formed. One African Union representative submitted that the African Union had warned about the risk of UNAMID rapid withdrawal in anticipation of the political change. Similarly, the African Union reportedly played a direct role in having the Transitional Military Council's decree 102, which required UNAMID to hand over all team sites to Rapid Support Forces, rescinded. Overall, the African Union expressed satisfaction with its contribution to the strategic decisions and regarded its partnership with United Nations as constructive and positive.

26. In addition to the mandated role, 32 per cent of United Nations Headquarters and UNAMID managers envisaged an enhanced operational role by the African Union in order for the transition to succeed. When asked, the African Union maintained that the operational-level transition planning and implementation was best left to the United Nations entities, in order to avoid any duplication of management, and focused on its strategic assistance.

4. UNAMID secured increased national engagement and commitment to an effective transition in Darfur, but risks remained

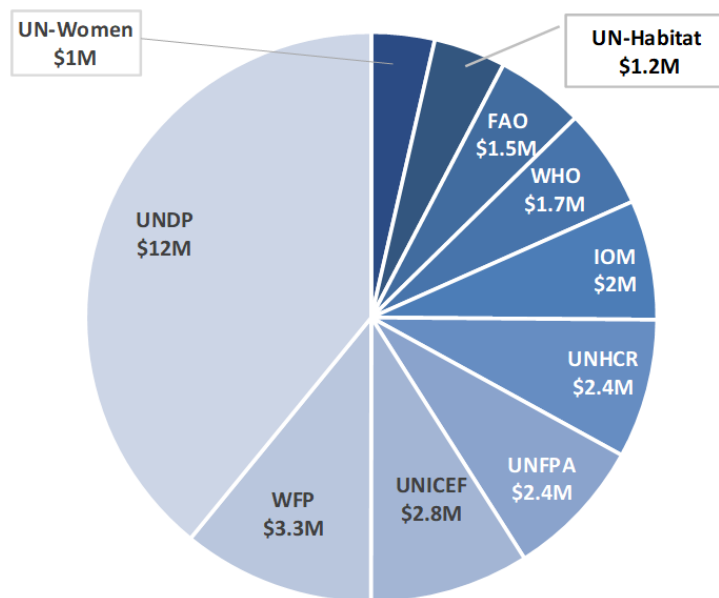
27. In total, 72 per cent of all interviewees agreed that the change of Government in the Sudan had been a catalyst for securing broad national ownership at a sufficiently high level to support effective transition in Darfur. The Government's increasing commitment was evident in the membership and engagement levels in meetings of the "5+5 committee" and in the clear articulation of the national priorities and needs of the Sudan from a potential United Nations follow-on presence.

28. Almost 60 per cent of UNAMID, country team and United Nations Headquarters interviewees, however, pointed to the volatility of this engagement, attributing it to two main factors. First, 68 per cent of the survey participants and 52 per cent of interviewees believed the Government required further assistance post-UNAMID to sustain peace. Second, despite a change in the political establishment in Khartoum, the State apparatus in Darfur remained largely intact, and some military governors appointed by the Transitional Military Council continued to be in power.

5. State liaison function activities progressed and generally met the stated objectives in the State liaison functions concept

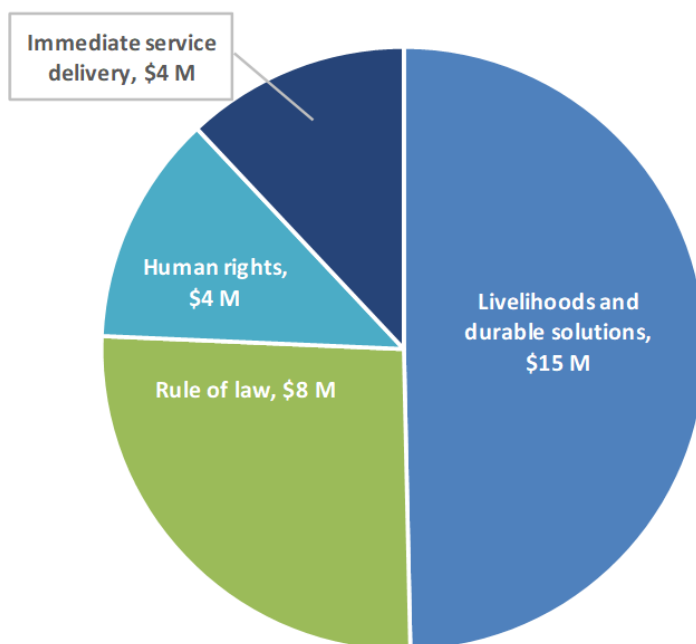
29. A primary result of joint transition planning and coordination between UNAMID and the country team was the establishment of State liaison functions, which was a joint analysis, planning and delivery mechanism towards common achievements and stabilization to avoid relapse into conflict in Darfur. State liaison functions were designed to facilitate a seamless transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding by focusing on shared priorities in the four areas of livelihoods/durable solutions, the rule of law, human rights and immediate service delivery. State liaison functions programmes were implemented in six-month-long periods in two phases between January and December 2019. State liaison functions 1 and 2 programmes were financed by a total assessed budget of \$32.2 million, distributed across 10 agencies, funds and programmes over the four areas (see figures III and IV). At the time of writing, State liaison functions 3 programmes were being designed with an allocation of \$9.1 million, to be implemented from January to March 2020.

Figure III
Distribution of assessed budget across 10 agencies, funds and programmes in Darfur for State liaison functions 1 and 2



Abbreviations: FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IOM, International Organization for Migration; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UN-Habitat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme; UNHCR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNICEF, United Nations Children’s Fund; UN-Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; WFP, World Food Programme; WHO, World Health Organization.

Figure IV
Approximate distribution of assessed budget across priority areas for State liaison functions 1 and 2



30. Despite its criticality to the entire transition, the establishment of State liaison functions was delayed owing to the late finalization of memorandums of understanding with 10 agencies, funds and programmes, delays in the disbursement of funds to agencies, the late deployment of UNAMID staff and uneven the finalization of staff terms of reference. The ensuing challenges (see table 3) had an adverse impact on the effectiveness of the State liaison functions by further delaying their implementation. However, the transition managers took steps to alleviate, if not eliminate, most of those concerns. Through an in-principle agreement, the delay in the finalization of memorandums of understanding was addressed by frontloading the funds of agencies, funds and programmes to begin the implementation of State liaison functions programmes. In addition, a series of workshops and visits with State liaison functions staff and government officials were conducted several months after the establishment of the State liaison functions, to listen to staff concerns and align programme implementation with priorities and needs on the ground.

Table 3
Challenges cited by State liaison functions staff and managers

<i>Nature of challenge</i>	<i>Description</i>
Programmatic	<p>Lack of coordination and integration across State liaison functions in Darfur</p> <p>Late release and insufficiency of funds, and tight timeline</p> <p>Lack of or sporadic communication with primary UNAMID sections</p> <p>Lack of visibility of the work of agency implementing partners</p> <p>Lack of monitoring and evaluation capacity within UNAMID</p>
Integration	<p>Unclear, dual reporting lines to UNAMID and agencies</p> <p>Lack of orientation of staff by UNAMID and agencies</p> <p>Inadequate or absent medical and security evacuation plans</p> <p>Insufficient resources</p> <p>Lack of connectivity between State liaison functions and UNAMID headquarters and logistics base</p> <p>Difficulty for agencies, funds and programmes to fully integrate UNAMID staff</p>
Contextual	<p>Lack of cash flow in the country and delayed payments to implementing partners, contractors or vendors</p> <p>Continuous inflation and lack of fuel in the country</p> <p>Political upheaval in Khartoum leading to reshuffling in State authorities, affecting implementation</p>

31. The perceived value of State liaison functions as a joint delivery mechanism was mixed. On the one hand, 43 per cent of UNAMID and country team staff and managers believed State liaison functions added value in accelerating the implementation of transition priorities, and some proposed that State liaison functions should be replicated as a best practice in other transition contexts. State liaison functions were seen to have:

(a) Brought together non-integrated United Nations entities and national authorities around a common objective;

(b) Provided additional financial and human resources to expand the presence of the country team in Darfur (e.g. UN-Women and UN-Habitat);

(c) Bridged the gap between peace and development pillars, laying the foundation for peacebuilding programmes;

(d) Provided some sense of confidence for the local population in Darfur by maintaining a United Nations presence.

32. On the other hand, 30 per cent of managers and staff were more cautious about the value of State liaison functions. They believed it was a good initiative in theory but had concerns related to its design, implementation, sustainability and effect on preventing relapse. One head of agency summarized this sentiment by describing State liaison functions as “helpful but not a game-changer”. In total, 73 per cent of the interviewees questioned the rigor of State liaison functions programme design, arguing that infrastructure development and uncoordinated training workshops may not prevent the relapse of conflict in Darfur. A few UNAMID and country team managers submitted that State liaison functions programmes had been retrofitted to the funds available, with no credible assessment of the comparative advantages or capacities of each implementing entity or of the conflict dynamics on the ground.

Figure V

Distribution of over 300 State liaison functions 1 and 2 projects

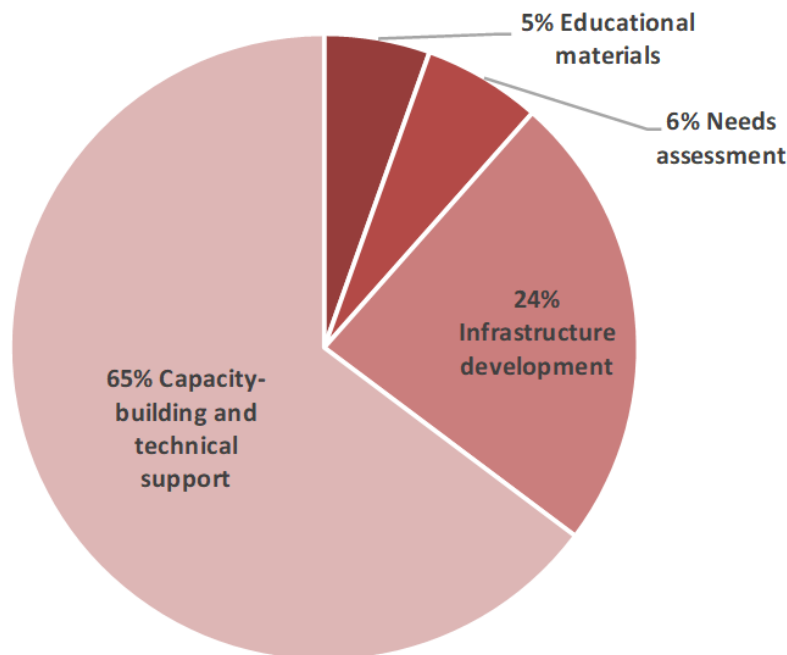
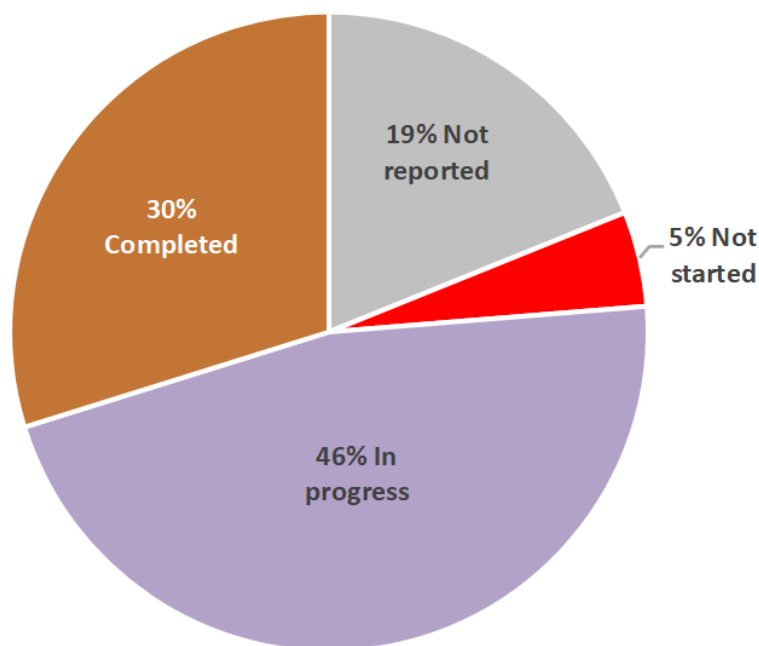


Figure VI
Rate of implementation of over 300 assigned activities during State liaison functions 1 and 2



33. Another major concern shared was costs and timeline of implementation. Some 44 per cent of State liaison functions staff and managers believed the financial resources assigned to State liaison functions were insufficient to generate visible value in the long term. Despite those shortcomings in design and implementation, State liaison functions programmes produced some early, short-term results. In total, 25 per cent of staff and managers confirmed the absence of a systematic monitoring and evaluation system and capacity to assess the outcomes of State liaison functions on the ground. Notwithstanding that weakness, 90 per cent of staff and managers believed that the provision of basic services, infrastructure development and capacity-building for State and communities were visible results towards building, strengthening and supporting State authority across Darfur. Similarly, all government officials and representatives of internally displaced persons (63 individuals) interviewed expressed their satisfaction with the support provided through State liaison functions programmes, especially in the areas of basic services, and asked that the engagement and the provision of resources continue, particularly for income-generating activities.

34. Some 35 per cent of staff and managers were also hesitant about the sustainability of State liaison functions programmes. Concerns were multifaceted, ranging from the untargeted selection of beneficiaries and localities to a lack of human resources and technical capacity of State and civil society actors to maintain the facilities.

C. UNAMID and the United Nations country team endeavoured to address conflict drivers, but significant risks of relapse into conflict remained

35. More than 80 per cent of the interviewees and 60 per cent of the survey respondents pointed to the persistence of the risk of relapse into conflict across Darfur and expressed their concern over the lack of a comprehensive strategy to address several facets of that risk.

1. Unaddressed root causes of conflict threatened stability and peacebuilding in Darfur

36. It was the general view of stakeholders that the root causes of conflict, including the management of and access to land, water and other resources, as well as the absence of security, basic services and livelihood opportunities leading to intercommunal clashes, were insufficiently addressed in Darfur and had an impact on the effectiveness of transition. Although UNAMID, together with the country team and the Government of the Sudan, provided sustainable solutions to address the drivers of conflict in order to prevent relapse, progress was slow in extending the State authority, strengthening the rule of law and finding sustainable durable solutions for displaced communities.

2. Humanitarian and protection needs of vulnerable populations remained high

37. Risks related to humanitarian and protection needs in Darfur remained high and unaddressed with over 3 million people affected, including 2 million internally displaced persons and 1.3 million refugees. Criminal attacks during livelihood activities, such as farming, as well as intimidation, harassment and sexual and gender-based violence against vulnerable populations were reported by UNAMID as persistent. During the transition period, the analysis of data from the Joint Mission Analysis Cell revealed that approximately 40 per cent of civilian fatalities had been due to criminal acts, and 17 per cent of all criminal and security incidents had been against internally displaced persons.

38. In accordance with Security Council resolution [2429 \(2018\)](#), the protection of civilians continued to be a mandate for UNAMID, including in areas already vacated “in extremis”. The lack of a UNAMID response to protect civilians during the attack on internally displaced persons camps and 21 villages in vicinity of El Geneina on 29 December 2019, in which 65 people were killed, 54 were injured, 46,000 people were displaced and 11,000 persons fled to Chad, had come under scrutiny at United Nations Headquarters and the Security Council.

3. Activities of paramilitary forces and armed groups remained a concern

39. The destabilizing activities and growing influence of paramilitary forces, such as the Rapid Support Forces, were viewed with caution and feared by the people of Darfur. According to UNAMID estimates, the return to Darfur of approximately 2,500 to 3,000 Rapid Support Forces fighters and 1,000 others who had been operating as mercenaries in Libya could fuel instability. Increased recruitment of fighters by armed groups was reported from the Darfur refugee community in Chad and from internally displaced persons within Darfur. In the greater Jebel Marra area, confrontations between government forces and the Sudan Liberation Movement-Abdul Wahid faction created instability.

4. Prevalence of weapons in communities and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration challenges remained a factor that could exacerbate instability

40. The illicit transfer, accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons was one of the most cited risk factors against stability in Darfur by key interviewees, including representatives of UNAMID, internally displaced persons and the Government. The Joint Mission Analysis Cell assessed the Government’s weapons-collection programme in the period 2017–2018 as uneven and discriminatory against certain tribes and, as a result, only a limited number of weapons were collected. Moreover, Darfur armed groups were reported to have acquired sophisticated weaponry to exploit the security vacuum in Darfur after the exit of UNAMID (see [S/2019/34](#)). The Joint Mission Analysis Cell estimated that the number of weapons within Darfur communities ranged from 700,000 to 2 million items. With UNAMID technical and logistical assistance to the Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, approximately 7,500 combatants were demobilized in the period 2015–2017, and around 2,000 ex-combatants were reintegrated, which partly mitigated the risk.

5. Despite the ongoing peace process, the risk of relapse of conflict in Darfur remained

41. Despite the peace process initiated by the Government of the Sudan in Juba in October 2019, the risk of relapse of conflict in Darfur continues to be a concern. As part of discussions pertaining to the Darfur track, major Darfur armed groups, except the Sudan Liberation Movement-Abdul Wahid, signed a framework agreement in December 2019. In interviews, despite the rejection of ongoing efforts by some internally displaced persons affiliated with the Sudan Liberation Movement-Abdul Wahid, the senior leadership of UNAMID and the country team, expressed confidence about positive outcomes from the peace negotiations, paving the way for sustainable peace in Darfur. Similarly, the African Union and government authorities interviewed, as well as some groups of internally displaced persons, viewed the peace negotiations as timely, positive and credible.

42. UNAMID was mandated, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2495 (2019), to provide logistical, technical and advisory support to the Juba peace process. UNAMID conducted consultative meetings with women, internally displaced persons and refugees from Darfur and facilitated their participation in the Juba peace talks. UNAMID senior leadership expressed its satisfaction about the mission's role in facilitating mediation between the Government and armed groups and supporting the National Peace Commission, and its preparedness to implement the provisions of peace agreements.

D. UNAMID identified and endeavoured to address reputational risks

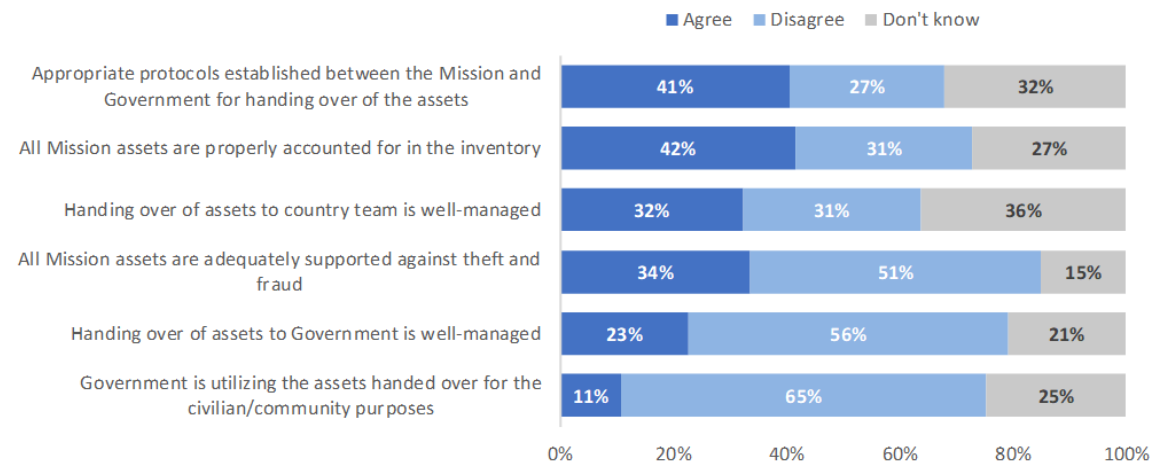
43. The majority of interviewees in the field and at headquarters noted some reputational risks for the Organization due to internal and external factors.

1. Internal asset management remained a major concern

44. The lack of proper accounting, inventory management, disposal actions (gifting, transfer, commercial sales, scrap, e-waste, etc.) and writing-off of mission assets remained a major concern and a potential reputational risk. There was no clarity on the total volume and value of all mission assets and equipment. UNAMID survey participants pointed to several discrepancies about the physical holdings and financial aspects of these assets (see figure VII).

Figure VII

UNAMID staff views on whether asset handover was properly managed



45. UNAMID took measures to account for and physically verify its assets during the past year to ascertain the magnitude of the challenges it faced. The lingering problems were attributed largely to legacy issues (i.e., assets received from the African Union Mission in the Sudan and other peacekeeping missions) and historic factors (i.e., a lack of systematic oversight, irregular physical inventory count, turnover of key staff, etc.). In addition, the migration of equipment and inventory data from Galileo to Umoja in 2017, the existence of unopened containers, the pending disposal of items under end-user certificate restrictions and the delayed destruction of dangerous goods were cited as major challenges. Reportedly, the lack of proper accounting during the drawdown and liquidation phases increased opportunities to commit theft, pilferage and fraud of UNAMID assets.

2. Misuse and misappropriation of team sites and assets handed over to government entities adversely affected community perceptions

46. The consequences of the misuse and misappropriation of UNAMID assets and premises by unauthorized persons and entities were cited by some key interviewees as a major reputational risk. The total net book value of assets in the 28 UNAMID bases handed over to the Government was \$126 million, including those looted in El Geneina and Nyala camps, worth \$25.7 million and \$55.7 million, respectively. The reported usurpation of assets and team sites by the Rapid Support Forces reported in the media and by UNAMID was perceived by the local communities as detrimental to their safety and security. For example, former United Nations-owned assets, including vehicles, generators, furniture and air conditioners, were stolen by the local population, including uniformed personnel, during the looting of the handed-over Nyala super camp. The Government gave its commitment to the Security Council that the handed-over UNAMID team sites would be used exclusively for civilian end-user purposes.⁴

47. Some managers noted problems with UNAMID team sites that limited their utility, such as their distance from townships, thereby reducing accessibility; the unsuitability of the infrastructure for civilian end-use purposes without modification; and the need for expertise to operate high-value assets and perform maintenance to sustain the facilities. Some staff members pointed to a lack of constructive engagement by UNAMID with the intended end users, including local Government authorities and communities, to ensure the protection, ownership and commitment for appropriate usage of bases and assets.

3. The residual team sites remained vulnerable to looting and criminal activities

48. Sixty-two per cent of UNAMID leadership and staff expressed concerns that the remaining team sites and high-value assets continued to be lucrative targets for looting and criminal activities. The Department of Peace Operations observed that the lessons learned from the looting incident of El Geneina had not helped UNAMID to prevent a similar incident in Nyala.⁵ UNAMID was yet to hand over 12 team sites, as well as the Mission headquarters in Zalingei and the logistics base in El Fasher, which accounted for total assets worth of \$56 million. UNAMID senior leadership and managers highlighted the challenges and dilemmas in responding robustly against looting and/or criminal incidents, when the large crowd of looters included women, children and uniformed personnel. To mitigate those risks, the Mission headquarters and team sites developed security contingency plans and base defence plans for the remaining team sites.

⁴ Meeting of the Tripartite Mechanism on 7 October 2019, and para. 5 of Security Council resolution 2429 (2018).

⁵ Department of Peace Operations briefing to the Security Council, 8 January 2020.

4. Risks related to environmental fallout needed continued focus

49. UNAMID took effective steps to manage and reduce the mission's environmental impact on personnel, local communities and ecosystems, such as environmental awareness-raising among mission components, outreach to government entities and communities, ordnance disposal screening, systematic environmental assessments and clean-ups and obtaining clearance for the operating bases handed over to the Government. However, a few UNAMID managers and mission support division staff pointed to continued reputational risk emanating from the stockpiling, packaging, storage and record-keeping of hazardous materials and dangerous goods; the stockpiling and disposal of e-waste scrap materials and dangerous goods, including expired ammunition; and the pending environmental inspection of unopened storage containers.

5. Potential for serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse, during drawdown and exit remained high

50. During the transition, the Resident Coordinator Office and UNAMID developed a comprehensive framework on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, including an action plan. However, the sudden spurt in the reported cases of sexual exploitation and abuse in UNAMID during the first quarter of 2020 was a serious ethical and reputational risk and concern to the Organization. UNAMID reported only one case of sexual exploitation and abuse each in 2017 and 2019, compared with five such cases in the first quarter of 2020. In addition, a total of 19 cases of prohibited conduct were reported during 2019. According to the UNAMID Conduct and Discipline Team, the unsettled conditions during drawdown and closure, as well as the local community's effort to obtain some financial benefits before the departure of UNAMID, potentially contributed to the spike in alleged cases of sexual exploitation and abuse.

E. Key factors contributed to or constrained the effectiveness and efficiency of transition in Darfur

1. Peacebuilding efforts activities lagged owing to contextual factors and needed sustained effort

51. Country team interviewees confirmed that the peacebuilding part of transition was inordinately delayed owing to the political transition and security situation in the Sudan, the lack of donor support and internal eligibility processing issues. The delay was evident in the lack of a Darfur-wide peacebuilding strategy, an integrated joint resource mobilization plan, a mapping of the country team's technical assistance for Darfur and a comparative advantage analysis of the major actors on the ground, as required by the mandate and directives.

52. The delay was further accentuated by the limited availability and unpredictability of funds for peacebuilding, early recovery and development in Darfur. Almost half (43 per cent) of the survey respondents believed that the country team did not have the necessary financial resources to advance the peacebuilding efforts in Darfur. Both UNAMID and country team interviewees commented that the assessed funds were conceived as seed money and provided a foundation for peacebuilding initiatives at the micro level. While the transition implementation started with Security Council resolution [2429 \(2018\)](#), the Sudan was made eligible in October 2019 to receive funds from the Peacebuilding Fund for five years only, and funds were made available in January 2020 after a lapse of 18 crucial months, which eventually delayed the programme implementation.

53. Interviewees from the Government, UNAMID and the country team appreciated the allocation by the Peacebuilding Fund of \$20 million for peacebuilding in Darfur and \$2.8 million from the Immediate Response Facility to support the National Peace

Commission, and the establishment of a peacebuilding fund secretariat by the Peacebuilding Support Office of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. UNAMID and country team managers confirmed that the Peacebuilding Fund projects were aligned with, complementary to and built upon the Mission's mandate priorities, ongoing State liaison functions programmes in Darfur, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the proposed Darfur Development Strategy refresher⁶ programmes.

2. United Nations systemic issues adversely affected transition in Darfur

54. Persisting systemic issues afflicted transition planning and implementation. As illustrated in previous sections, the geographic and functional fragmentation of transition leadership, institutional siloes within and among entities, and different mandates and their application limited the level of integration required to implement jointly the whole-of-system approach.

55. The lack of integration between UNAMID and the country team, especially for State liaison functions and peacebuilding programming, was cited by one third of the interviewees as a major challenge against effective transition. Two major contributing factors were discussed. The first was the non-integrated mission structure (32 per cent of interviewees) whereby UNAMID and the country team did not share a common decision-making platform. The second related to different institutional mandates and cultures, as evidenced by different programmatic approaches, financial and administrative rules and regulations.

3. United Nations Headquarters backstopping was adequate

56. The backstopping provided by United Nations Headquarters, especially by the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Operational Support, for the drawdown, closure and liquidation, was adequate. UNAMID senior leadership appreciated the joint transition project of the Department of Peace Operations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and United Nations Development Programme, which provided capacity-building support (i.e., training workshops, consultants, etc.), direct support (i.e., in drafting the joint transition action plan, as well as senior level mentoring) and support by way of the sharing of experiences and lessons learned from previous transitions. Similarly, some UNAMID mission support division managers confirmed not only the use of guidance provided by the multifunctional coordination group in the Department of Operational Support for the closure, exit and liquidation of the Mission, disseminated through a planning workshop, but also the sharing of end-of-mission reports from the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti. United Nations Headquarters also provided surge capacity to fill in critical gaps at the technical level.

57. Some inadequacies were also mentioned regarding United Nations Headquarters backstopping. Almost all UNAMID managers expressed concern that the strategic assessment mission did not fully reflect the reality on the ground as communicated by UNAMID sections. One clear illustration of this was a special report (S/2019/445) in which the strategic assessment did not acknowledge the impact of political transition in Khartoum on the security situation in Darfur, despite its communication by UNAMID sections. However, the Department of Peace Operations clarified that the strategic assessment mission process was consultative and factual and reflected UNAMID inputs. In addition, the Resident Coordinator Office referred to a lack of information-sharing and systematic engagement with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations in matters related to peace and security in the Sudan. The Resident Coordinator Office also noted that the

⁶ The vehicle to articulate the programmatic activities of the United Nations country team in Darfur.

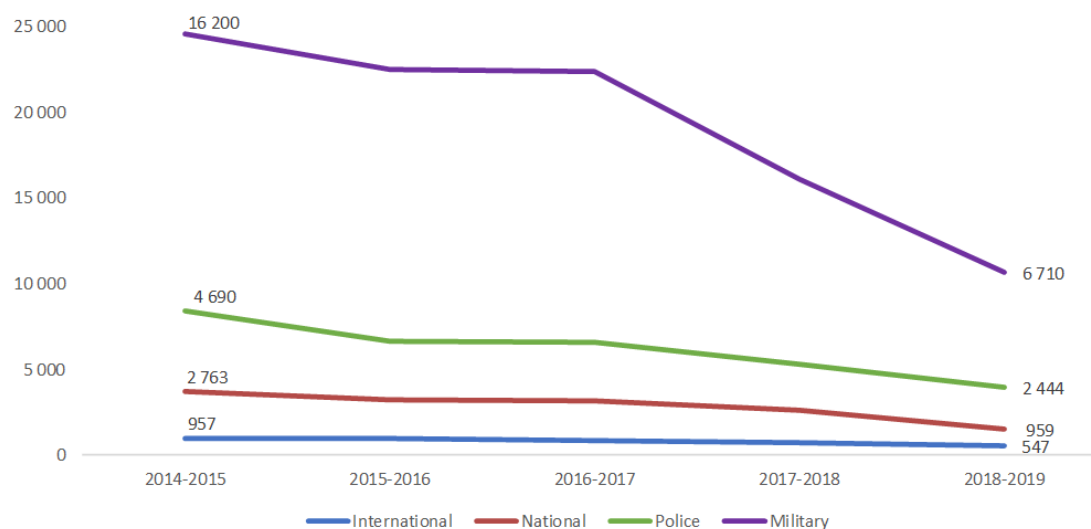
engagement with and support from the Development Coordination Office for transition planning and implementation was minimal.

4. Human resources drawdown and low morale affected transition

58. The human resources drawdown in UNAMID and resulting low morale affected the preparations for drawdown, exit and liquidation, as well as the joint transition planning and implementation.

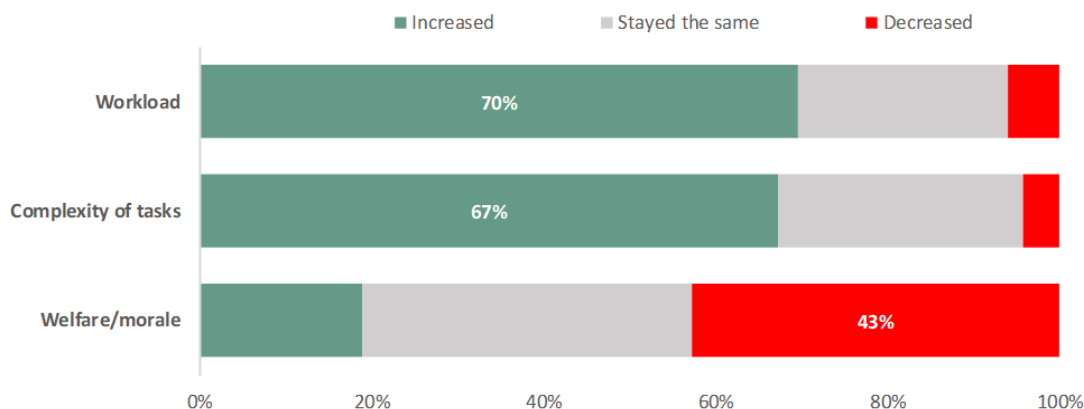
Figure VIII
Reduction of human resources from 2014 to 2019

(Number of staff)



59. UNAMID staff and managers reported that the volume and intensity of transition-related activities to be implemented was overwhelming (see figure IX below). The uncertainty about jobs also contributed to low morale and productivity in some staff members. Staff counselling services were used 3,763 times during April 2018 to February 2020, pointing to continued morale issues. Moreover, attrition in key appointments was said to be affecting institutional memory and transition management by mission leadership and staff members.

Figure IX
Correlation between increase in volume and complexity of tasks and decrease in morale



60. UNAMID continued to support staff members in furthering their job opportunities and career development. Since January 2018, a total of 130 staff members were reassigned to other United Nations system entities and peacekeeping missions, which was actively supported by the Department of Operational Support and the UNAMID human resources section. From July 2018 to March 2020, UNAMID conducted 178 capacity-building events in which 1,866 national staff and 31 United Nations volunteers were trained. However, the national staff union and national staff members were concerned about the usefulness and tangible benefits of such endeavours. In addition, the memorandum of understanding between the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, the Department of Operational Support and the Development Coordination Office to allow for more flexible placement arrangements between the United Nations Secretariat and agencies, funds and programmes, and including the downsizing policy for the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Department of Operational Support envisaged in the Secretary-General's planning directive for the development of consistent and coherent United Nations transition processes, in furtherance of the "one United Nations approach to staffing", was found to be still pending at the Headquarters level.

V. Conclusion

61. The ongoing transition in Darfur demonstrates some successes and innovation but also persistent challenges. An assessment of its overall effectiveness must necessarily account for its complex external environment, fraught as it was with political and security upheavals specific to it, but which now must go forward under the new global reality of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

62. On the positive side, UNAMID transition activities brought the United Nations system together with the African Union, the Government of the Sudan and local communities around a common platform. While the unprecedented political transition slowed the process, it also brought about flexibility and agility in recalibrating the United Nations intervention in Darfur. Progress included realigning internal preparations, recalibrating the exit strategy, advancing the work of State liaison functions, addressing potential reputational risks and strengthened and proactive engagement with the Government.

63. However, persistent challenges existed related to the unity of leadership and the differing mandates, cultures and procedures, priorities and preferences of the various United Nations system entities. It is unlikely that those will be reduced substantially without the high-level and sustained attention of decision-makers at United Nations Headquarters. The risk of increased sexual exploitation and abuse at a time when resources are dwindling poses an additional cause for concern.

64. In the current context, the gains in Darfur are fragile, and there is a need for resolute focus by United Nations Headquarters, UNAMID and the country team on the short to middle term to collectively work to prevent Darfur from relapsing into conflict. Shortages of food and a disruption to economic activity depriving large numbers of people of their livelihood may present an opportunity for armed elements to increase their activities, which are inimical to a sustained peace. Should that happen, or should any combination of events with similar consequences occur, all the efforts and the results achieved by the international community could be wasted.

65. As part of institutional learning and record keeping, it would be essential to undertake a Headquarters-led comprehensive review of the legacy of UNAMID to establish the contribution and impact achieved in Darfur from its inception to the final closure, keeping in view the Mission's hybrid nature and non-integrated setting, and the overall political and security environment experienced during the lifetime of the Mission.

VI. Recommendations

66. The Office of Internal Oversight Services Inspection and Evaluation Division has made the below critical and important recommendations for each result area.

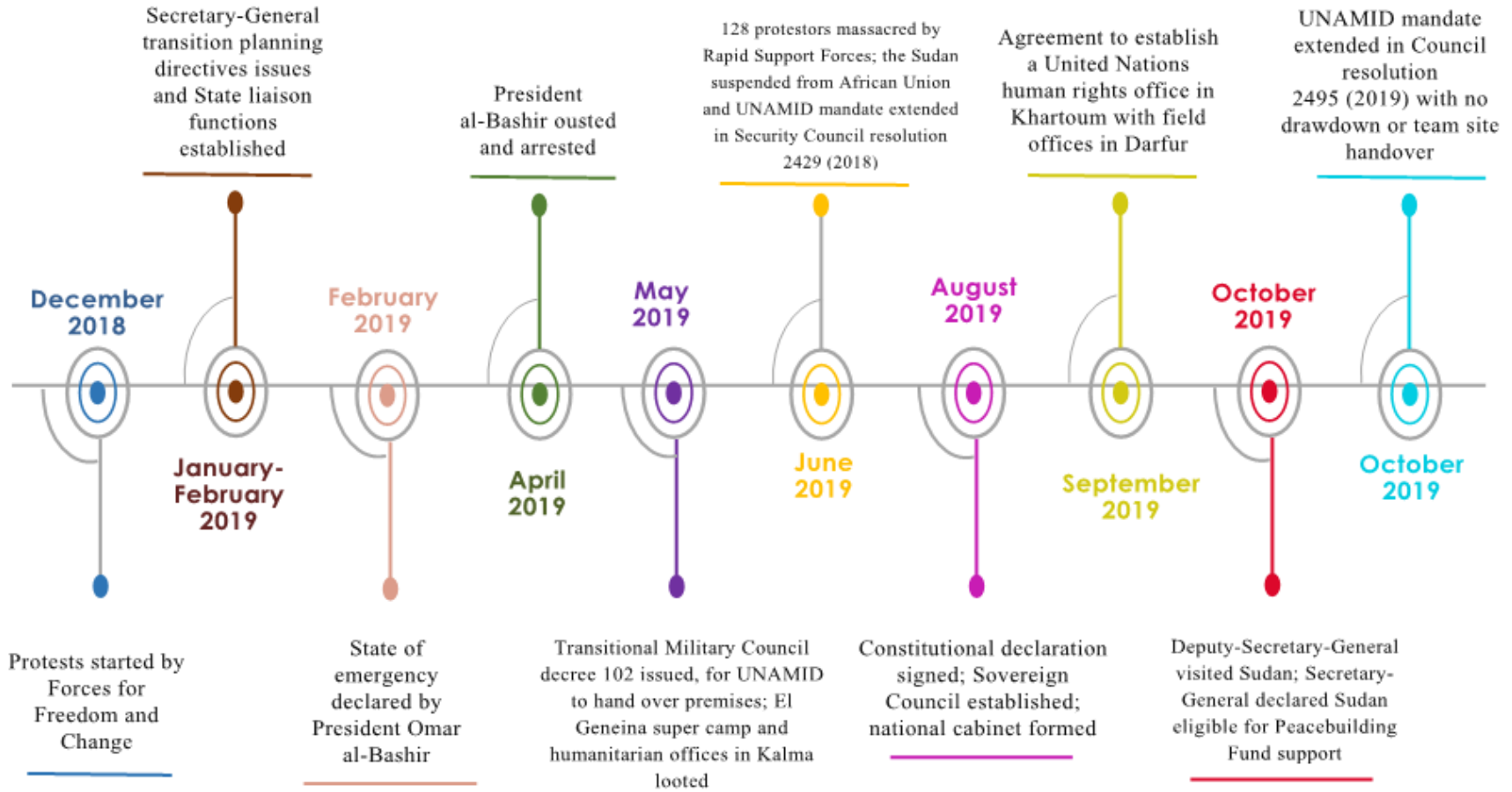
Table 4
Recommendations

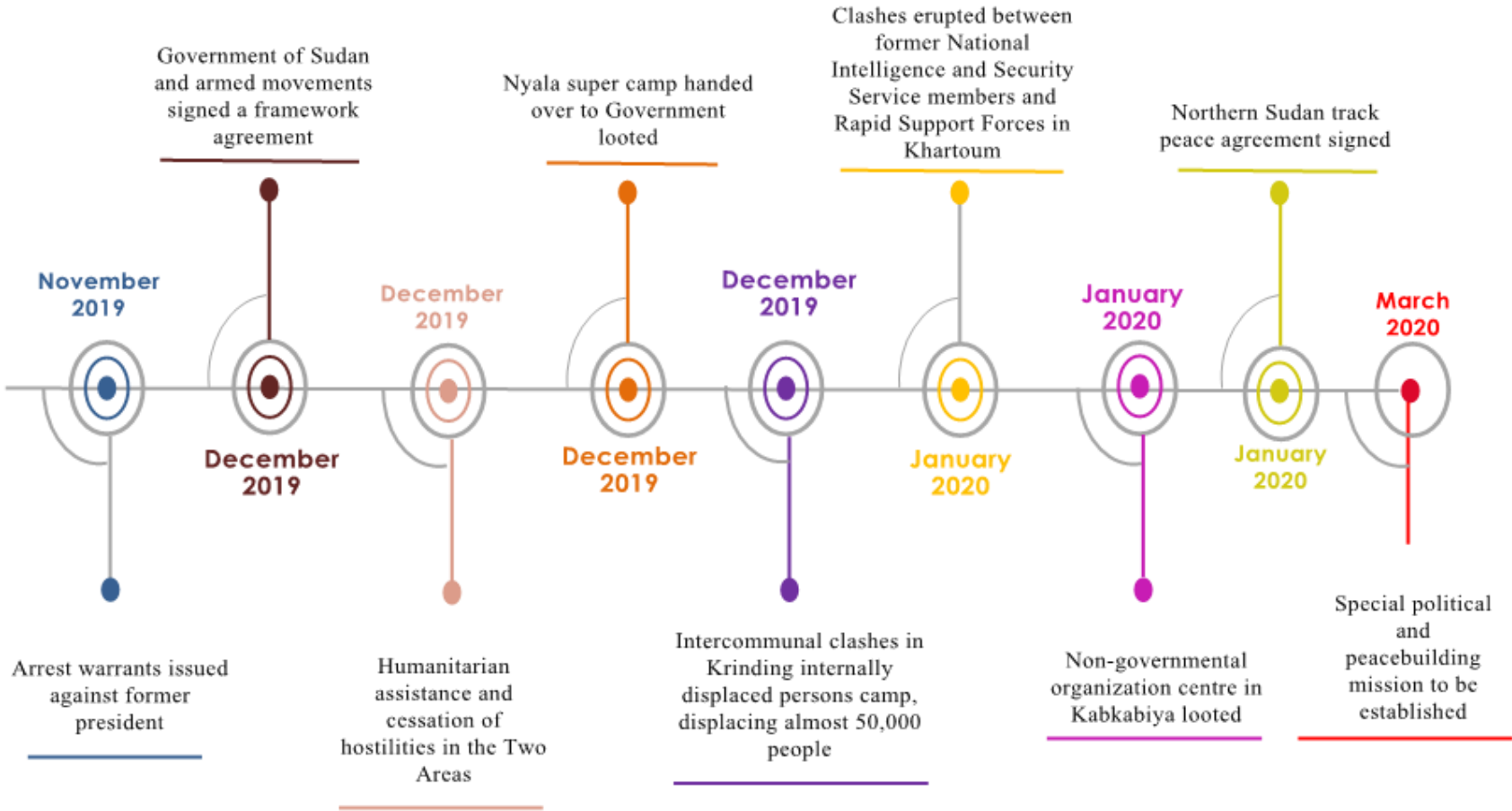
<i>Results (see section in text)</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Section IV. A. 3	(a) Department of Peace Operations, Department of Operational Support and Development Coordination Office should document lessons learned and best practices from prior United Nations transitions of peace operations suitable for and disseminated to each level	Important	Publication of a compendium of lessons learned and best practices on transition
	(b) United Nations Headquarters should revise and update the 2013 policy on United Nations transitions in the context of mission drawdown or withdrawal, in line with new guidance given by the Secretary-General, Executive Committee and lessons learned from the recent transitions in Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Liberia and the Sudan	Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised policy reflects latest Executive Committee guidance on transition and lessons and best practices from recent transitions • Promulgation of revised transition policy
Section IV. B. 1	Department of Peace Operations and Development Coordination Office should facilitate synergy and harmony among UNAMID and the United Nations Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS)/country team leadership, to foster unity of vision and effort within and among their entities towards accomplishment of the mandated transition objectives	Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNAMID reporting lines aligned with Secretary-General's directives • Increased leadership dialogue and common messages between UNAMID and UNITAMS/country team • Increased involvement of country team members in transition discussions
Section IV. B. 2	(a) UNAMID and the Resident Coordinator Office should establish a joint monitoring and evaluation mechanism to systematically report on and readjust the transition activities	Important	Regular, systematic review of and progress updates on the joint transition action plan and readjustment of activities
	(b) UNAMID and the Resident Coordinator Office should strengthen coordination mechanisms at all levels to advance transition in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic	Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced or no overlap of programme coverage and outreach; reduced or no redundancy/duplication of programmatic activities • Improved synergies and sequencing of programmatic activities

<i>Results (see section in text)</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Section IV. B. 5	UNAMID and UNITAMS/country team should assess utility and applicability of State liaison functions as an integrated joint delivery mechanism for future transitions before being replicated	Important	Analysis of suitability and sustainability of State liaison functions programmes
Section IV. C. 1	United Nations Headquarters should ensure all significant and unmitigated risks of relapse, including protection needs, remain a strategic focus in discussions on UNITAMS with the Secretary-General and the Security Council and ensure that this is supported by an analysis of peacebuilding needs and requirements in Darfur	Critical	Analysis of unaddressed risks and protection and peacebuilding requirements by UNAMID and the Resident Coordinator Office and inclusion of those analyses in the planning of a follow-on mechanism
Section IV. D. 1	UNAMID should carry out physical verification and accounting of all assets and equipment to ensure fool-proof liquidation	Important	Systematic accounting, disposal and write-off of all assets and equipment as per rules and regulations
Section IV. D. 2	United Nations Headquarters and UNAMID should review and modify the guidelines, framework and agreement of handover process with the host government to ensure rightful use of United Nations premises and assets	Important	Issuance of revised guidelines and securing commitment from the Government
Section IV. D. 3	Plans for security of UNAMID staff, assets and equipment in all operating bases should be reviewed and updated	Important	Updated security plans
Section IV. D. 5	UNAMID should identify transition-specific risks related to sexual exploitation and abuse and take measures to address them	Important	Zero cases of sexual exploitation or abuse
Section IV. E. 4	Department of Peace Operations, Department of Operational Support, Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and Development Coordination Office should facilitate employment opportunities and placement of staff from transitioning missions in the follow-on mission, other peacekeeping missions, the wider United Nations system entities and national government system (especially for the national staff), on the basis of their competencies and skill sets	Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorandum of understanding on placement arrangements finalized between Department of Operational Support, Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and Development Coordination Office • Downsizing policy promulgated for Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and Department of Operational Support • Opportunities provided and actual placements made • National staff absorbed in the national government system

<i>Results (see section in text)</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Section VI	Department of Peace Operations and Department of Operational Support should undertake a review of the legacy of UNAMID to establish the Mission's contribution and impact in the hybrid and non-integrated setting within the overall political and security environment for institutional learning	Important	Plan is established to review UNAMID legacy

Timeline of major events that affected political transition in the Sudan and the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur





Annex II*

Management response

Comments received from the Department of Peace Operations

A reference is made to OIOS-2020-01277 of 28 August 2020, with which the final draft report of the OIOS on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of UNAMID in supporting transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur in collaboration with the UNCT (IED-19-008) is transmitted for our formal review and comments. We would like to take this opportunity to thank OIOS for completing this evaluation and conveying valuable insights and lessons learned for the ongoing transitions in Sudan/Darfur.

We have shared our views on the prior drafts of the report, as well as on the advisory memorandum on the first phase of the evaluation in our DPPADPO-2019-05962, dated 6 January 2020. We would like to reiterate some of these comments, which also echo the points raised by the Joint Special Representative of UNAMID in his response dated 25 September 2020, as follows:

(1) The State Liaison Functions (SLF) concept was a novel approach to fill the gap in non-integrated settings, and its applicability in other mission areas should be explored;

(2) The issue of resistance to change, which comes out in a latent way, would merit special attention, particularly in the conditions of volatile environment UNAMID and most of our operations are compelled to deliver;

(3) The rigor of methodology could strengthen the objectivity of the study's findings based on staff interviews. Views and experiences of those designing the SLFs, for example, could be paired with those of Darfuri beneficiaries or against scenarios in which these innovations did not exist; and

(4) The linkage between the substantive discussions on the transition, on the one hand, and asset management and handover issues, on the other, is not clear. The latter subject will merit an examination in its own right.

In addition, further analysis on the following two aspects could enrich the recommendations of the report:

(5) Whether the geographical reconfiguration of the Mission structure and the consequent fragmentation of UNAMID leadership, is a shortcoming of strategic nature in attempting to tailor peacekeeping approaches to local conditions, or whether the shortcoming was a result of how the decision was implemented. In case of the latter, what rules and procedures could have mitigated these challenges?; and

(6) Which factors led to delays in launching the SLFs, and whether their impact would require longer-term engagement.

These important themes will have broader implications in our ongoing efforts to ensure sustainable transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. We look forward to a continued constructive partnership.

* In the present annex, the Office of Internal Oversight Services presents the comments received from the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, UNAMID and the Resident Coordinator Office in the Sudan on the evaluation of UNAMID in supporting transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur in collaboration with United Nations country teams.

Comments received from the Department of Peace Operations

Further to the response we have provided to the final draft report of OIOS on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of UNAMID in supporting transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Darfur in collaboration with the UNCT (IED-19-008), please find attached our feedback to your action plan for the implementation of its recommendations. These inputs have been coordinated within DPPA-DPO, DOS, and UN DCO.

While these recommendations are aligned with findings of the report, we are also confronted by peculiar challenges concerning the transition and drawdown of UNAMID, which hinges on the extent of cooperation from the Sudanese authorities. While we strive to ensure the orderly and safe withdrawal and handover of UNAMID's assets and expertise to UNITAMS, UNCT, and the Sudanese authorities, the timeline and framework to do so may diverge from the standard practice or past experiences of mission closure. In addition, as the Security Council is expected to terminate the mandate of UNAMID by 31 December 2020, a number of recommendations go beyond the scope of the Operation. We hope to work with OIOS to readjust what is expected in the action plan, as the process moves forward, so as to reflect the complexity and dynamics on the ground.

Comments received from the Resident Coordinator Office

I formally accept the recommendations contained in the Final Report of 8 December 2020 and I am pleased that the Plan of Action clearly shows the progress made by the UN system in Sudan in addressing the recommendations to date, as listed overleaf.

I am pleased that the Joint Transition Cell (JTC) is monitoring progress on the transition and residual actions are identified and collectively addressed so there are no gaps. It is also evident that UNITAMS is benefiting from the State Liaison Function (SLF) experience to inform the development of its comprehensive peacebuilding and stabilization programme for the UNCT to support UNSCR [2524 \(2020\)](#) mandate implementation as well as the development of peacebuilding projects in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states.

From experience in other mission settings, I know how difficult it is for UN entities to work in an integrated manner, and for this reason I applaud the progress made in Sudan particularly in terms of the SLFs. I believe we have in the SLFs a tried and tested vehicle for transition. What UNAMID achieved through the SLFs is remarkable - very few missions that I am aware of could have managed to channel USD 42 million to joint programming together with the embedding of staff with the UNCT beyond mere co-location in only a two-year period.

Comments received from the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I acknowledge the report and am pleased that the Mission's last round of comments provided on 5 September to your technical team on the earlier draft report have been largely accommodated.

I am grateful for the new sections on the methodology and limitations as earlier requested by the Mission. These allow the legacy of the SLFs to be better understood within context.

Adoption and implementation of the recommendations has supported the development of a joint monitoring and evaluation framework that has guided a new field validation and monitoring exercise, reviewing over 50 activities, conducting site visits, preparing case studies, and human-interest stories. Additionally, through the renewed UNAMID-RCO coordination mechanisms through the expanded, regularised meetings both of UNAMID and the UNCT, but also of the so-called 5x8 mechanism, including SLF implementation partners and federal level representation drawn from the ministries in the Transitional Government of Sudan (TGoS).

With reference to the suggestion in Paragraph 22 that SLF 1 and 2 programmes did not fully reflect TGoS's needs, I wish to remind that SLF is a mandate implementation modality, and that the Government's needs can be considered when they are within the mandate. Similarly, with reference to Para 38, a line to note that the magnitude of the problem requires systemic changes from within Sudan would have placed UNAMID's attempts in perspective.

I wish to record my sincere thanks to you and your team for the report and the recommendations. Many of the relevant recommendations have been actioned as the attached action plan would show. UNAMID is working closely with UNITAMS and UNCT to complete the remaining action points.

Annex III

Office of Internal Oversight Services response to formal comments from the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, UNAMID and the United Nations country team

OIOS thanks and appreciates DPPA-DPO, UNAMID and RCO-Sudan/UNCT for their valuable comments made on the evaluation report and the action plan to implement the recommendations in support of the transition in Sudan and future transition in other conflict settings.

OIOS acknowledges and appreciates the concerted and proactive steps taken by DPPA-DPO as well as UNAMID in coordination with UNCT to concurrently refine/readjust/recalibrate transition activities based on the OIOS Advisory Memorandum issued on 07 October 2019 and the regular feedback provided to the leadership/managers by the evaluation team as part of the real-time nature of the evaluation.

OIOS underscores the need for UNITAMS and UNCT to continue build on the peace dividends gained through the activities of UNAMID and maintain the momentum of transition for durable peace and security.

The progress made on the implementation of the recommendations will be monitored by OIOS through existing procedures.
