



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2017/025

Audit of quick impact projects in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

There was a need to strengthen controls over the management of quick impact projects to ensure their effective and timely implementation

20 April 2017
Assignment No. AP2016/637/08

Audit of quick impact projects in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes over management of quick impact projects (QIPs) in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The audit covered the period from 15 September 2014 to 31 October 2016 and included a review of the governance mechanism, planning and implementation, and evaluation and closure of QIPs.

MINUSCA adequately ensured that QIPs were in line with its overall plan and broader strategy. However, the Mission needed to strengthen management controls over the implementation of QIPs to ensure effective and timely implementation.

OIOS made seven recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, MINUSCA needed to:

- Amend its standard operating procedures to include requirements for the QIPs Unit and the project review committees to oversee the implementation and monitoring of QIPs;
- Assign engineering expertise to support the implementation of QIPs, including a process to review and provide technical support to civil works projects;
- Ensure that the Project Review Committees and the QIPs Unit systematically assess the capacity of implementing partners and the quality of their proposals including cost estimates;
- Include QIPs work plans and deliverables in the performance evaluation of individual QIP focal points;
- Implement a checklist for completion by QIPs focal points confirming that all the relevant processes have been completed before the closure of a QIP;
- Increase public awareness and project visibility by erecting MINUSCA boards at all sites of completed QIP; and
- Conduct an annual evaluation of the QIPs programme.

MINUSCA accepted the recommendations and has initiated the necessary action to implement them.

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Audit of quick impact projects in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of quick impact projects (QIPs) in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).
2. QIPs are small, rapidly implementable projects meant to build confidence in the Mission and improve the environment for effective mandate implementation. In accordance with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support (DPKO/DFS) Policy on QIPs, a project should have a budget of up to \$50,000 and be implemented within six months.
3. The MINUSCA QIPs Management Team (the QIPs Unit) within the Civil Affairs Section is responsible for coordinating the QIPs programme and facilitating the disbursement of funds to implementing partners. The QIPs Unit is headed by a staff at the P-3 level that reports to the Chief, Civil Affairs Section at the D-1 level and is assisted by two staff at the Mission's headquarters in Bangui and civil affairs officers at the respective field locations.
4. MINUSCA QIPs budgets for 2014/15 and 2015/16 were \$1.0 million and \$3.0 million, respectively. In 2014/15 and 2015/16, MINUSCA funded 139 projects at the total cost of \$4.0 million.
5. Comments provided by MINUSCA are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes over management of QIPs.
7. This audit was included in the 2016 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the operational and reputation risk related to the management of QIPs.
8. OIOS conducted this audit from October to December 2016. The audit covered the period from 15 September 2014 to 31 October 2016. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risks in the management of QIPs, governance mechanism, planning and implementation, and evaluation and closure of QIPs.
9. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews of key personnel, (b) review of relevant documentation, (c) analytical reviews of data, (d) random sample testing of control effectiveness for 45 of 139 projects valued at \$1.1 million, and (e) physical observation of 35 projects located in Bangui, Bouar, Bambari, Ndele, Bria and Bangassou.

III. OVERALL CONCLUSION

10. MINUSCA had taken adequate steps to ensure that QIPs were in line with its overall plan and broader strategy. However, MINUSCA needed to strengthen management of QIPs by: amending its standard operating procedures (SOPs) to include requirements for the QIPs Unit and the project review committees (PRCs) to oversee the implementation and monitoring of individual projects; assigning

engineering expertise to support the implementation of QIPs; systematically assessing the capacity of implementing partners and the quality of their proposals including cost estimates; and including QIPs-related deliverables in the performance evaluation of individual project focal points.

IV. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Governance and strategic direction

Adequate oversight mechanisms were required for the implementation of QIPs

11. The DPKO/DFS and Civil Affairs Policies and guidelines on QIPs require the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to: (a) constitute a Senior Management Team (SMT) to establish priorities for QIPs; and (b) establish a PRC to evaluate and approve the selection of partners and QIPs for implementation, and approve changes to budget and scope during implementation. A QIPs Unit is to be constituted to ensure effective budget forecasting, monitor allocation of funds and spending, and review and screen project proposals before submitting them to the PRC. Where possible, MINUSCA should allocate engineering expertise to the QIPs Unit and/or appoint a focal point within the Engineering Section to review and provide technical expertise to projects.

12. Interview with staff of the QIPs Unit, review of PRC minutes and QIPs records showed that the Mission's SMT established priorities and allocated funds for QIPs. The Mission had: (a) established a QIPs Unit within the Civil Affairs Section; (b) properly constituted a PRC in each of its 12 field offices, thereby decentralizing the oversight of QIPs; (c) allocated a focal point from the respective Mission components (QIPs sponsors) such as the Justice and Corrections Section; and (d) developed terms of reference for the implementation of QIPs in line with the DPKO/DFS and Civil Affairs Policies. A review of the terms of reference indicated that they included the requirement for the PRC and the QIPs Unit to monitor QIPs and recommend remedial actions.

13. However, neither the PRCs nor the QIPs Unit had been assigned responsibility to oversee the work of focal points to ensure QIPs implementation were monitored and any delays were brought to their attention for appropriate action. Additionally, the Mission did not assign engineering expertise to support the implementation of QIPs and there was no involvement by the Engineering Section in the implementation of QIPs even though 115 of 139 (82 per cent) of these projects involved civil works.

14. The above resulted as MINUSCA did not allocate sufficient engineering expertise to support QIPs implementation. It was also because MINUSCA's QIPs SOPs did not properly clarify responsibilities in taking action on project delays, ensuring monitoring visits were conducted and the required reporting by focal points was being done. As a result, QIPs implementation were delayed and there were cases of substandard work.

(1) MINUSCA should amend its standard operating procedures to include requirements for the QIPs Unit and the project review committees to oversee the implementation and monitoring of individual projects.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 1 and stated that it was amending its SOPs to include requirements for: (a) heads of offices to regularly convene meetings of their PRC to review new QIPs, oversee QIPs and report to the Office of the Coordination of Field Offices on implementation; (b) monitoring visits by the QIP Unit; and (c) guidance for focal points. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of the amended SOPs that include requirements for the QIPs Unit and PRCs to oversee the implementation and monitoring of individual projects.

(2) MINUSCA should assign engineering expertise to support the implementation of quick impact projects, including a process to review and provide technical support to civil works projects.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 2 and stated that it had requested for a post in its 2017/18 proposed budget to recruit a national staff with engineering skills and was looking into the possibility of assigning engineering expertise from existing resources for the implementation of QIPs. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has assigned the necessary engineering expertise in support of the implementation of civil works projects.

There were adequate steps to ensure QIPs were in line with its overall plan and broader strategy

15. The Mission's senior management is required to establish priorities for QIPs for geographic and thematic focus, taking into account the unique nature and mandate of the Mission, and in line with the overall Mission plan and broader strategies for community outreach and allocate funds in the Mission's budget, based on needs assessment.

16. A review of the records of 45 of 139 QIPs implemented during the audit period indicated that the SMT, under the leadership of the SRSG, had set priorities for QIPs including: protection of civilians; promotion of social cohesion and restoration and extension of state authority. Also, based on a needs assessment conducted by the Civil Affairs Section, the SMT also allocated QIPs funds to offices and sectors in 2015/16 and 2016/17 based on established thematic and geographical priorities. For example, in 2015/16, the SMT allocated QIPs funds to 12 priority locations in the following areas: 43 per cent to restoration of state authority; 39 per cent to promotion of social cohesion; and 18 per cent to protection of civilians. For 2016/17, SMT allocated QIPs funds to the following areas: 30 per cent for social cohesion; 25 per cent for restoration of state authority; 20 per cent for protection of civilians; and 25 per cent for other social services such as education and water.

17. OIOS concluded that MINUSCA had set clear priorities and allocated adequate resources to QIPs.

The Mission had established memoranda of understanding with implementing partners

18. The DPKO/DFS Policy on QIPs requires the Director of Mission Support to establish memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with implementing partners. A review of records pertaining to 45 QIPs indicated that PRCs reviewed each project proposal, the SRSG reviewed and approved the minutes of the PRC and the DMS signed the MoUs with implementing partners prior to the disbursement of the first instalment of funds.

19. OIOS concluded that MINUSCA had implemented adequate procedures for the establishment of MoUs to govern the implementation of QIPs.

B. Planning and implementation

There was a need to strengthen the project selection and approval process

20. The DPKO/DFS Policy and MINUSCA SOPs require the QIPs Unit and PRCs to conduct adequate review of QIPs proposals including: (a) assessments of the capacities of implementing partners; and (b) reviews of budgets and cost estimates to ensure their reasonableness and the budget for each

project does not exceed \$50,000. The DPKO/DFS Policy on QIPs required MINUSCA to coordinate with other United Nations entities to ensure that QIPs do not duplicate or undermine other humanitarian or developmental activities.

21. A review of the files for 45 QIPs and review of the minutes of PRCs meetings and project proposals indicated that MINUSCA:

- Implemented its projects in coordination with the United Nations entities such as the United Nations Development Programme and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs operating at the respective locations. During the audit period, MINUSCA selected and used other United Nations entities to implement three projects. The audit did not find any indication of duplication; and
- MINUSCA had established budgets for individual projects not exceeding \$50,000.

22. However, the QIPs Unit did not conduct adequate reviews of QIPs proposals including: (a) assessment of the capacities of implementing partners; and (b) review of budgets and cost estimates prepared by implementing partners on behalf of the respective sponsoring Mission components to ensure their reasonableness. For example:

- While information was gathered on the legal status of implementing partners, there was no evidence that the technical and financial capabilities of these partners had been assessed before they were selected. The Mission had created questionnaires to assess the quality of implementing partners; however, in practice, these questionnaires were completed prior to making the second instalment payment. By then, it was too late and the Mission would have suffered financial loss related to the first instalment payment and lost the opportunity to achieve the objective the QIP due to the poor performance of the implement partner;
- The QIPs Unit maintained a price list of commonly used items for two field offices that was used in reviewing projects budgets and cost estimates; however, the Unit did not have similar lists for the other 10 field offices although prices varied between sectors; and
- In Bambari, the technical assessment for the rehabilitation of three bridges prepared by an implementing partner on behalf of the sponsoring Mission component did not identify defects in beams supporting the bridges, which needed to be replaced as part of the project. Also, in Bangui, the proposal for a project to rehabilitate a building for persons with disabilities did not indicate that the building was not supported with steel bars, which resulted in unforeseen work to fit new steel bars.

23. The above occurred because: of the lack of engineering expertise to support the implementation of the QIPs programme; and the QIPs Unit was not systematically assessing the capacity of implementing partners and validating the reasonableness of their proposals, including checking planned costs against current price lists.

24. As a result, there was a risk that QIPs were not completed in a timely manner and in accordance with acceptable standards. For example, as indicated below, there were delays in completing projects, which could be attributed to the low competence of implementing partners.

(3) MINUSCA should implement procedures to ensure that project review committees and the QIPs Unit systematically assess the capacity of implementing partners and the quality

of their proposals including cost estimates.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the QIPs Unit had created a new form to enforce the requirement for the systematic assessment of implementing partners by the PRCs before a QIP commenced. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has assessed the capacity of implementing partners and the quality of their proposals.

Funds were disbursed to implementing partners on a timely basis

25. The DPKO/DFS Policy on QIPs requires MINUSCA to disburse the first instalment to the implementing partner immediately following the signing of the MoU. The Finance Section requires one week to complete an electronic fund transfer.

26. A review of payments data for 45 QIPs indicated that MINUSCA made payments to implementing partners within nine days on average. The QIPs Unit had established adequate controls to ensure: (a) implementing partners provided MINUSCA with correct bank account information; and (b) the creation of implementing partner accounts and funds commitments in Umoja.

27. OIOS concluded that MINUSCA had implemented effective procedures for the disbursement of funds to implementing partners.

Monitoring of projects needed improvement

28. The DPKO/DFS Policy and Guidelines on QIPs requires MINUSCA to regularly monitor implementing partners and conduct at least one site visit during the life of the project and prepare related reports and submit them to the QIPs Unit. The Mission's SOPs set a maximum implementation time of not more than six months, and MoUs signed by MINUSCA and implementing partners requires projects to be completed within three months. Further, work conducted by QIPs focal points should be integrated into their work plans and the performance evaluation process. The Mission's SOPs on QIPs require project focal points to agree and set up monitoring plans with implementing partners.

29. A review of the files for 45 QIPs and visits to 35 projects indicated inadequate evidence that project focal points were agreeing and establishing monitoring plans and conducting site visits; 29 of the 45 QIPs that required monitoring reports were not prepared. As a result, the quality of projects was sometimes poor as follows:

- There were delays in completing projects. For example, 14 of the sampled 45 projects were delayed by an average of five months. As at June 2016, six projects had not started even though the Mission had paid the initial instalment of \$186,600 as early as February 2016. Only 63 per cent of projects initiated in 2015/16 had been completed as at October 2016 even though the Mission in these cases had set a maximum implementation time of three months in MoU with the partner to complete each project;
- Ten projects visited by OIOS had structural defects or construction flaws resulting in leaking roof and cracked walls and floors; and
- A project to rehabilitate 12 wells in Bria was recorded as 100 per cent complete even though the implementing partner substituted the required hydraulic water pump with a rope in all wells and also changed the locations of four wells without the knowledge or approval of MINUSCA.

30. The above occurred because the QIPs Unit and focal points were not adequately monitoring and reporting on the progress of QIPs. Further, the involvement of the focal points in QIPs activities was not consistently included in their performance evaluations and this requirement was not included in the Mission SOP on QIPs. As a result, the requirement for monitoring visits and related reporting was not enforced. For example, a review of the minutes of PRCs indicated that these committees did not include QIPs implementation in their meeting agendas. Moreover, MINUSCA did not provide adequate guidance to project focal points to ensure effective performance of their respective mandated monitoring tasks. If implemented, recommendation 1 in the present report would result in improved monitoring of QIPs.

(4) MINUSCA should include QIPs-related deliverables in the performance evaluation of individual project focal points.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 4 and stated that the Civil Affairs Section would request the heads of sections and Mission components to include QIPs-related deliverables in the performance evaluation of staff involved in the implementation of QIPs. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence showing that the focal points' performance evaluation has included QIPs-related deliverables.

C. Project evaluation and closure

Need to implement adequate project closure and enhance project visibility

31. The MINUSCA SOPs for managing QIPs require project focal points to conduct site visits with relevant stakeholders and prepare closure and evaluation reports promptly upon the completion of QIPs. The DPKO/DFS Policy and Guidelines on QIPs requires the QIPs Unit and project focal points to ensure that projects are visible to the local population and appropriately publicized in collaboration with the Public Information Office during implementation and successful completion.

32. A review of completion documents such as the results of project completion site visits, final narratives and financial reports, assessment of the implementing partner performance for 31 completed QIPs indicated that closure and evaluation forms had not been prepared by the project focal points for 16 projects. Further, while the Mission's Public Information Office had communicated QIPs activities to Government officials and the general public through press releases and by public commissioning of projects, 10 of the 35 projects visited by OIOS did not have sign boards as the focal points did not insist that the partners erect the sign boards. These 10 projects included a potentially high visibility project, i.e., the Youth National Centre Equipment project in Bangui with a total funding of \$48,000.

33. The above resulted because the QIPs Unit had not implemented the checklist it had established during the 2016/17 budget exercise to confirm that all the relevant processes have been completed before the closure of a project. Also, the project focal points through field monitoring visits did not ensure that implementing partners placed the visibility boards at project sites as required by the MINUSCA SOPs for managing QIPs.

34. In the absence of documented assessments of the implementing partner's performance, the Mission may not make informed decisions with respect to the continued cooperation with the implementing partner, increasing the risk of financial loss and poorly implemented QIPs. Further, without sign posts, MINUSCA was not adequately publicizing QIPs, impacting on the visibility of these projects to the local population and risked other parties taking credit for implementing QIPs.

(5) MINUSCA should implement the checklist for completion by quick impact project focal points to confirm that all relevant processes have been completed before the closure of a project.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 5 and stated it was amending its SOPs that would include: a checklist to be completed by focal points before the payment of the second instalment; and a requirement for project focal points to confirm that all relevant processes have been completed before the closure of a project. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has confirmed that all relevant processes have been completed before the closure of projects.

(6) MINUSCA should increase public awareness and project visibility by erecting MINUSCA visibility boards at the sites of all completed projects.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 6 and stated that, as per the SOPs being amended, heads of offices, PRCs and project focal points would ensure that implementing partners systematically integrate the need to erect MINUSCA visibility boards for all projects in their work plans. Recommendation 6 remains open pending OIOS verification that MINUSCA visibility boards have been erected at the sites of completed projects.

Annual evaluations of QIPs were not conducted

35. The DPKO/DFS Policy on QIPs requires the QIPs Unit to conduct an annual evaluation of the QIPs programme in coordination with PRCs. Missions with ongoing QIPs programme may periodically facilitate an external evaluation of the impact of the programme, if required.

36. MINUSCA had not conducted an evaluation of the QIPs programme to assess its impact, and identify future confidence-building needs, problems, best practices and lessons learned. The Mission had however prepared end-of-year performance reports, mainly focusing on the activities of the programme but not the impact or outcome such as the contribution of the programme to building confidence in the peace process and promoting acceptance of the Mission and its mandate. The PRCs were also not involved in preparing these reports. This occurred because MINUSCA management did not request the QIPs Unit in conjunction with the PRCs to annually evaluate the programme. Also, although MINUSCA allocated resources to source programme evaluation expertise in the Mission's proposed 2017/18 budget, its inclusion in the budget was not approved by DPKO/DFS.

(7) MINUSCA should ensure the QIPs Unit: (a) conduct annual evaluations of the QIPs programme in coordination with project review committees; and (b) strengthen its requests for resources to conduct an external evaluation of the impact of quick impact projects.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 7 and stated that: the SRSG would issue instructions to ensure resources were allocated to conduct an external evaluation of impact of QIPs; and the Mission was developing a form to evaluate the impact of each QIP. Recommendation 7 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has evaluated the impact of quick impact projects annually.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

37. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of MINUSCA 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 quick impact projects in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
1.	MINUSCA should amend its standard operating procedures to include requirements for the QIPs Unit and project review committees to oversee the implementation and monitoring of individual projects.	Important	O	Receipt of the amended SOPs that include requirements for the QIPs Unit and PRCs to oversee the implementation and monitoring of individual projects.	31 March 2017
2.	MINUSCA should assign engineering expertise to support the implementation of quick impact projects, including a process to review and provide technical support civil works projects.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has assigned engineering expertise to review and provide technical support for the implementation of civil works projects.	8 February 2017
3.	MINUSCA should implement procedures to ensure that project review committees and the QIPs Unit systematically assess the capacity of implementing partners and the quality of their proposals including cost estimates.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has assessed the capacity of implementing partners and the quality of their proposals.	31 January 2017
4.	MINUSCA should include QIPs-related deliverables in the performance evaluation of individual project focal points.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has included QIPs-related deliverables in the performance evaluation of staff involved in the implementation of QIPs.	31 March 2017
5.	MINUSCA should develop and implement a checklist for completion by quick impact project focal points to confirm that all relevant processes have been completed before the closure of a project.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has confirmed that all relevant processes have been completed before the closure of projects.	31 March 2017
6.	MINUSCA should increase public awareness and project visibility by ensuring that implementing partners erect MINUSCA visibility boards for all projects.	Important	O	OIOS verification that MINUSCA has erected visibility boards at the site of each completed project.	31 December 2016
7.	MINUSCA should ensure the QIPs Unit: (a) conduct	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has	30 June 2017

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 MINUSCA in response to recommendations.

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of quick impact projects in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
	annual evaluations of the QIPs programme in coordination with project review committees; and (b) strengthen its requests for resources to conduct an external evaluation of the impact of quick impact projects.			conducted annual evaluations of the QIPs programme.	

APPENDIX I

Management Response

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

TO: Mr. Bolton Tarleh Nyema, Chief
A: Peacekeeping Audit Service
Internal Audit Division. OIOS

DATE: 27 March 2017

REFERENCE: SRSG/COG/2017

FROM: Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga
DE: SRSG

SUBJECT: Comments on audit of Quick Impact Projects in the United Nations Multidimensional
OBJET: Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (assignment No. AP2016/637/08)

1. In reference to your memo of 28 February transmitting the draft report of the audit on the quick impact projects in MINUSCA, I am pleased to transmit to you hereto my response and comments.
2. I would also like to confirm that the Mission has started implementing since the end of 2016 the corrective measures in response of the seven important recommendations that had been accepted.
3. I take note that OIOS will post the final report on its website 30 days after its issuance.

Cc: Mr. Milan Trojanovic, Director of Mission Support
Mr. Aboubacar Koulibaly, OIC, Pillar Restoration of State Authority
Mr. Laurent Guepin, Chief Civil Affairs
Mr. Luc Mbega, QIP Programme Manager
Mr. Daniel Curea, Audit Focal Point
Mr. Ibrahim Bah, Chief Resident Auditor
Ms. Cynthia Avena-Castillo, Professional Practices Section, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Management Response

Audit of quick impact projects in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1.	MINUSCA should amend its standard operating procedures to include requirements for the QIPs Unit to oversee the implementation and monitoring of individual projects.	Important	Yes	Chief of Civil Affairs & Coordinator of the QIP Unit	March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SOP has been amended accordingly by the QIP Unit and Civil Affairs mid-February and sent early March to Legal Office for endorsement by the SRSG: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From January 2017, Heads of Offices will be responsible for the regular holding of Project Review Committees (at least 4 to 6 times a year) not only to review new projects, but also to oversee and report to the QIP Unit and to the Office of the Coordination of Field Offices on the implementation and monitoring of individual projects. 2. In addition, QIPs Monitoring visits (2 to 3 times a year) will be added to the QIP Unit Check list before the payment of 2nd installments (new monitoring forms are ready to be shared with QIP Focal Points and colleagues). 3. The amended SOP also provides QIPs Focal Points with necessary guidance for QIPs and the selection of implementing partners.

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 quick impact projects in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
2.	MINUSCA should assign engineering expertise to support the implementation of quick impact projects, including a process to review and provide technical support civil works projects.	Important	Yes	DMS & Chief Engineering Section	08 February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A requesting memo has been sent to the DMS on 08 February 2017 to request the assignment of engineering expertise, including a process to review and provide technical support as recommended. • In addition, starting from July 2017, Civil Affairs will recruit a national staff with engineering skills if the request for additional staff for the 2017-2018 RBB is approved by ACABQ. This seems to constitute the only viable solution that will partially answer to the recommendation but not replace the need for systematic engineering expertise for all projects in all of the 12 field offices.
3.	MINUSCA should implement procedures to ensure that project review committees and the QIPs Unit systematically assess the capacity of partners to implement projects and validate the quality and reasonableness of their proposals including cost estimates against up to date price lists for budgeted materials.	Important	Yes	HoOs & PRC	July 2016 and January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2015-2016, two questionnaires have been created by the QIP Unit to provide a final quality assessment a) of the implementing partners and b) of the impact of projects. A price list for field offices has also been established. • Since the beginning of the 2016-17 QIP exercise, filling the two questionnaires is a requirement before the sending of the request of the 2nd installment payment.

Management Response

Audit of quick impact projects in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the projects visited by auditors have not received the 2nd installment, which explains why the auditors could not find the questionnaires in the file provided to them by the QIPs unit. • From January 2017, a new Capacity Assessment Form of implementing partners has been adapted to the CAR context in order to enforce the requirement for the systematic assessment of Implementing Partners by the Project Review Committee (PRC), at the beginning and at the end of projects. • Another form has been circulated among all PRC members and QIP Focal Points to evaluate the project and its impact among the population and to report to the PRC and the QIP Unit on lessons learned and best practice. • The QIPs Unit will ensure that Project Focal Points systematically fill these form before proceeding with the second installment payment. • The QIP unit has updated the price list and circulated it to all field offices. This will be re-sent at least

Management Response

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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						twice a year.
4.	MINUSCA should include QIPs work plans and deliverables in the performance evaluation of mission personnel involved in supporting the programme.	Important	Yes	DMS	March 2017	Civil Affairs will draft a memo for the DMS to request in March (start of new evaluation cycle) Heads of Offices, Chiefs of Sections, programme managers, QIP Focal Points within all civil, UNPOL and military components as well as members of PRCs to include QIPs work plans and deliverables in the performance evaluation of mission personnel involved in supporting the programme.
5.	MINUSCA should develop and implement a checklist for completion by quick impact project focal points confirming that all the relevant processes have been completed before the closure of a project.	Important	Yes	Chief of Civil Affairs & Coordinator of the QIP Unit	June 2016 and March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The QIPs Unit has established since the 2016-17 budget cycle a check list to be completed before the payment of the 2nd installment. It was presented to the QIPs Focal Points at the last QIPs Training held in June 2016. The amended SOP is reminding of the clear timelines and procedures agreed upon, including the above-mentioned existing checklist to confirm that all the relevant processes have been completed before the closure of projects.
6.	MINUSCA should increase public awareness and project visibility by ensuring that implementing partners erect MINUSCA visibility boards for all projects.	Important	Yes	Heads of Offices and PRC	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every project is handed over by MINUSCA to national authorities at the occasion of an official ceremony that provides large and systematic visibility.

Management Response

Audit of quick impact projects in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is true that most but not all of the closed projects already have a MINUSCA visibility board. Therefore, starting December 2016, the QIP Unit, Heads of Offices, Project Review Committees Project and Project Focal Points ensure that Implementing Partners systematically integrate the need to erect MINUSCA visibility boards for all projects in their work plans. • This point has also been added in the amended SOP.
7.	MINUSCA should ensure the QIPs Unit: (1) conduct annual evaluations of the QIPs programme in coordination with project review committees; and (2) strengthen its requests for resources to conduct an external evaluation of the impact of quick impact projects.	Important	Yes	DMS	June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction will be sent by the SRSG to ensure that OIOS conducts annual evaluations of the QIPs programme in coordination with project review committees; and (2) that resources are allotted by MINUSCA to conduct an external evaluation of the impact of quick impact projects. • In addition, Civil Affairs and the QIP Unit will continue to produce an annual report on QIPs as well as questionnaires of impact assessment for each project.