# INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

# AUDIT REPORT

## Audit of management of vacancy rates in UNMIS

### Delays in the recruitment process and high staff turnover contributed to the high vacancy rates in UNMIS

**8 January 2009**
**Assignment No. AP2008/632/03**

United Nations Nations Unies

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

OFFICE OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT SERVICES - BUREAU DES SERVICES DE CONTRÔLE INTERNE

INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION - DIVISION DE L'AUDIT INTERNE

TO: Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi
A: Special Representative of the Secretary-General
United Natinos Mission in the Sudan

DATE: 8 January 2009

REFERENCE: IAD: 09-02098

Fatima

FROM: Fatoumata Ndiaye, Officer-in-Charge
DE: Internal Audit Division, OIOS

SUBJECT: **Assignment No. AP2008/632/03 - Audit of management of vacancy rates in UNMIS**
OBJET:

1. I am pleased to present the report on the above-mentioned audit.

2. Based on your comments, we are pleased to inform you that we will close recommendations 2 to 4 and 6 to 9 in the OIOS recommendations database as indicated in Annex 1. In order for us to close the remaining recommendations, we request that you provide us with the additional information as discussed in the text of the report and also summarized in Annex 1.

3. Please note that OIOS will report on the progress made to implement its recommendations, particularly those designated as high risk (i.e., recommendation 5, in its annual report to the General Assembly and semi-annual report to the Secretary-General.

cc: Mr. Kiplin Perkins, Director of Mission Support, UNMIS
Mr. Farid Zarif, Chief of Staff, UNMIS
Ms. Heather Landon, Chief of Mission Support, UNMIS
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# INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

**FUNCTION**

*"The Office shall, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations examine, review and appraise the use of financial resources of the United Nations in order to guarantee the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, ascertain compliance of programme managers with the financial and administrative regulations and rules, as well as with the approved recommendations of external oversight bodies, undertake management audits, reviews and surveys to improve the structure of the Organization and its responsiveness to the requirements of programmes and legislative mandates, and monitor the effectiveness of the systems of internal control of the Organization" (General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B).*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Management of vacancy rates in UNMIS

OIOS conducted an audit of management of vacancy rates in the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). The overall objective of the audit was to determine the causes and effects of high vacancy rates on the Mission's operations and the effectiveness of measures taken by management in filling vacant posts. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

The Mission had succeeded in reducing its overall civilian staff vacancy rates from 44 per cent in fiscal year 2005/06 to 17 per cent in 2007/08. However, the vacancy rates in the international professional staff category remained high at 36 per cent despite the Mission having been delegated the authority to recruit international staff. In fiscal year 2007/08, the number of staff leaving the Mission had exceeded arrivals. If this trend continues for fiscal year 2008/09, the Mission may experience further delays in programme implementation and meeting targets. OIOS also noted the following:

- Approximately 71 international staff posts were vacant for periods exceeding one year and the programme managers had either delayed or not initiated recruitment actions.

- Recruitment process timeframes in UNMIS far exceeded targets established by the Department of Field Support.

- The Human Resources Section was not adequately staffed to cope with the increased responsibilities relating to the delegated authority.

- UNMIS was experiencing high staff turnover among the international professional staff in Khartoum and Juba and this had caused delays in the implementation of programme plans and activities across the Mission.

- UNMIS did not fully adhere to the standard operating procedures on the selection of alternate candidates for interviewed posts. In other cases, alternate candidates were not selected whenever the primary candidates declined offers which led to an inefficient recruitment process and prolonged vacancies.

UNMIS needs to monitor the delays in the recruitment process and ensure adherence to established recruitment guidelines for the timely deployment of staff.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the management of vacancy rates in the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS). The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

2. The UNMIS Human Resources Section (the HR Section) falls under the office of the Director of Mission Support. It is headed by the Chief Civilian Personnel Officer responsible for the management of civilian personnel functions including recruitment of local and international staff, extension of staff contracts, maintenance of time and attendance records, processing of travel and related documents, reporting on staff performance and career development. The responsibilities exclude the recruitment of UN Volunteers (UNVs) and related administrative functions that are handled by the UNMIS UNV office.

3. As of 30 June 2008, the Mission had 3,161 civilian staff members including 280 international professional staff, 466 field service staff, 136 national professional officers and 2,279 national staff. The staffing requirement reduced following the transfer of approximately 543 posts along with the staff for the Darfur region of Sudan upon creation of a new peacekeeping mission, United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

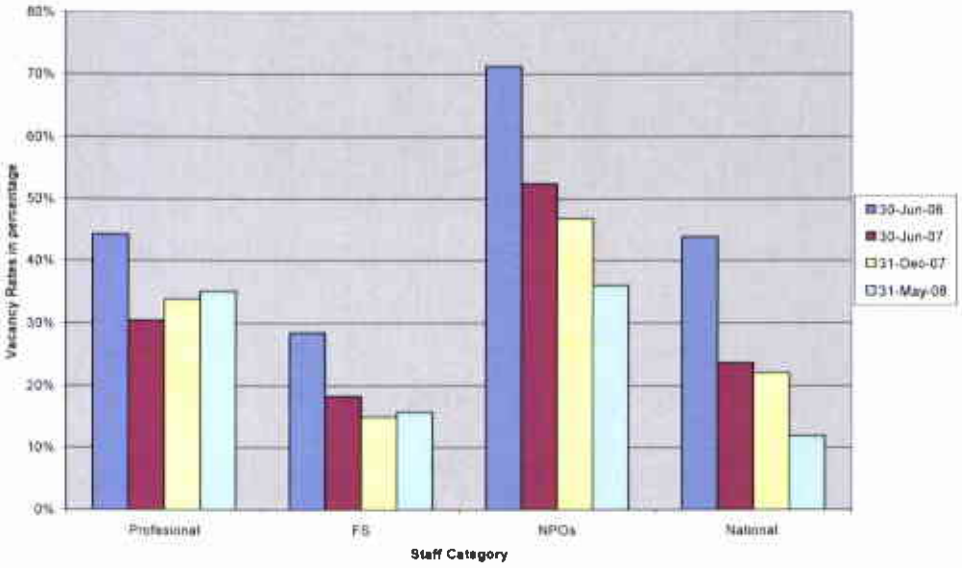
4. Vacancy rate is the variance in percentage of posts not filled against those funded in a particular budget period. Table 1 below shows statistics of UNMIS authorized civilian staff posts and vacancy rates over the last fiscal years.

**Table 1: Authorized civilian posts and vacancy rates**

| Description/ Period | 30 June 2006 | 30 June 2007 | 30 Dec 2007 | 30 June 2008 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approved Posts | 3,743 | 4,474 | 4,335 | 4,335 |
| Planned deployment | 3,743 | 4,474 | 4,257 | 3,792 |
| Posts filled by end of period | 2,110 | 3,333 | 3,240 | 3,161 |
| Vacant posts | 1,633 | 1,141 | 1,017 | 631 |
| End of period Vacancy Rates | 44% | 26% | 24% | 17% |

5. In July 2007, the Department of Field Support (DFS) delegated authority for recruitment and appointment of international staff to UNMIS in order to expedite the filling of vacant posts. As of June 2008, the Mission had succeeded in reducing the overall vacancy rates for civilian staff to 17 per cent. However, analysis of trends by staff category have shown that UNMIS continued to experience consistently high vacancy rates exceeding 30 per cent in professional staff categories for both national and international staff as shown in Chart 1 below:

Chart 1: Graphical Presentation of Vacancy Rates by category




6. Comments made by UNMIS are shown in *italics*.

# II. AUDIT OBJECTIVES

7. The main objectives of the audit were to:

(a) Determine the causes and effects of high vacancy rates on the Mission's operations; and

(b) Assess the effectiveness of measures taken by management in filling vacant posts.

# III. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

8. The audit included the examination of international and national staff vacancies for the last three fiscal years from 2005/06 to 2007/08. It did not cover vacancy rates among military personnel, civilian police and UNVs.

9. The audit methodology involved the review of relevant procedures, guidelines, budgets and other records supporting the recruitment process. It also included analysis of staff recruitment and retention to evaluate the effectiveness of management actions in addressing vacancies. Interviews were conducted with key personnel in the HR Section, programme managers for sections with high vacancy rates and other staff with human resources responsibilities.

# IV. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## A. Causes of high vacancy rates

Vacancies with no recruitment actions

10. UNMIS maintains records of authorized civilian staff posts in the Nucleus system for international staff and the Field Personnel Management System (FPMS) for national staff. The total authorized civilian strength as at 30 June 2008 was 3,792 posts, of which 626 posts (comprising 254 posts for international staff and 372 posts for national staff) were vacant.

11. The programme managers are responsible for planning of posts and initiating recruitment actions for vacant posts in their respective sections. Table 2 shows an aging analysis of international vacancies as at 30 June 2008, which indicates that at least 95 international staff posts (37 per cent) were vacant for more than one year.

**Table 2: Aging analysis of International staff vacancies as at 30 June 2008**

| Staff category | Less than or equal to 1 yr | Between one & 2 yrs | > 3 yrs | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ASG | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| D-2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| D-1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| P-5 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 18 |
| P-4 | 29 | 5 | 16 | 50 |
| P-3 | 35 | 10 | 14 | 59 |
| P-2 | 18 | 6 | 7 | 31 |
| FS-OL | 60 | 17 | 13 | 90 |
| **TOTAL VACANT** | **159** | **42** | **53** | **254** |
| **Percentage** | **63%** | **16%** | **21%** | **100%** |

12. Of the posts vacant for over one year, 10 posts were abolished in fiscal year 2008/09, 14 posts were under recruitment, and 71 posts had not been encumbered due to lack of recruitment actions. OIOS observed that the programme managers had either not initiated recruitment actions timely or the planning of human resources was inadequate at programme management level. Other reasons for the delayed filling of vacant posts included: (a) posts loaned to other sections that were not filled for periods exceeding one year; (b) posts frozen pending approval for movement to higher level; (c) the absence of suitably qualified candidates in Nucleus for some vacancy announcements; and (d) high decline rate for invitation for interview and the high decline rate on offers made.

13. The HR Section did not have copies of periodic staffing tables for national staff over the last three fiscal years and FPMS was not designed to generate historical data. For this reason, OIOS was not able to perform a similar aging analysis for national staff. Furthermore, recruitment files lacked some pertinent details for the analysis of delays such as recruitment actions initiated by

the programme managers, multiple requests for shortlists submitted prior to the interview list and approval by the HR Section of the selection decision.

**Recommendations 1 to 3**

**The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should:**

**(1) Regularly perform an aging analysis of all vacancies to ensure appropriate recruitment action for long-unfilled posts and establish accountability for avoidable delays;**

**(2) Request the Field Personnel Division at United Nations Headquarters to clear additional candidates for posts lacking suitably qualified candidates to expedite the filling of vacant posts; and**

**(3) Ensure that recruitment files are properly maintained, archived and contain all the pertinent information supporting the recruitment process.**

14. *The UNMIS Division of Mission Support accepted recommendation 1 and stated that currently UNMIS is required to update simultaneously three databases on post management, none of which can generate vacancy aging reports. UNMIS HR Section has requested Field Personnel Division (FPD) in UN Headquarters to design a reporting facility to generate vacancy aging reports in Nucleus or Integrated and Management Information System (IMIS), to enable an improved monitoring of vacancies and adequate action.* Recommendation 1 remains open pending the introduction of a system/database to generate vacancy aging reports to enable better post management.

15. *The UNMIS Division of Mission Support accepted recommendation 2 and stated that UNMIS HR Section has developed a matrix to be filled by programme managers when reviewing shortlists of cleared candidates justifying why these candidates are thought unsuitable for positions to be filled. This matrix will also be used as a supporting document for requests to clear additional candidates when the number of suitable candidates is insufficient.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 2 has been closed.

16. *The UNMIS Division of Mission Support accepted recommendation 3 and stated that UNMIS HR Section has already initiated the implementation of the recommendation including establishing checklists on the recruitment process and relevant supporting documents.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 3 has been closed.

Delays in the recruitment process

17. Until June 2007, the Recruitment Tiger Team had assisted UNMIS in recruiting international staff. After which, DFS transferred the delegation of recruitment authority to the Mission for all positions including and up to the D-1 level in order to expedite the recruitment process and reduce the international

staff vacancy rate. However, in July 2008, DFS took back the technical clearance authority in respect of the following:

(a) All chiefs of section in the mission support component;

(b) Medical and procurement service positions at the FS-6/7 and professional levels; and

(c) Positions where the Department of Peacekeeping Operations relies on specialized expertise available within the UN Secretariat to perform the technical clearance, which includes: Social Affairs, Programme Management, Human Rights, Public Information, Rule of Law, Security, Electoral Affairs and Legal Affairs.

18. The average recruitment timeframe for all categories of staff based on staff reporting in the last six months had far exceeded the established targets as shown in Table 3. A further analysis of recruitment time-lags showed delays in the following processes: (a) the short listing of candidates for interviews; (b) the selection of candidates interviewed; and (c) the issuance of appointment letters; and (d) the processing of UN Laissez-Passers and visas.

**Table 3: Recruitment process timeline (in days) against targets**

| Staff Category | Selection Process | On-boarding Process | Total | Recruitment target* | Recruitment time-lag |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **International Staff** | | | | | |
| Professional | 67 | 131 | **199** | 75 | **124** |
| Field service | 45 | 112 | **157** | 75 | **82** |
| **National Staff** | | | | | |
| Professional | 121 | 52 | **172** | 75 | **97** |
| General service | 75 | 43 | **118** | 75 | **43** |

* Based on the 18 February 2008 DFS guidelines on the pilot implementation of the human resource action plan for missions, which limit the recruitment period for both national and international staff to a maximum of 75 days: 30 days for the selection process, i.e., from the identification of a vacancy at the mission level to the selection decision and 45 days from the approval of the selection decision to the candidate's reporting date.

19. UNMIS explained that they were not given additional staff members to implement the delegated authority at the time it was granted and that FPD/DFS made a decision to put on hold the recruitment of human resource officers in the Missions until a review of the candidates in Nucleus was completed. The Mission redeployed additional posts in the 2007/08 budget and requested for new posts in the 2008/09 budget, but the selected candidates had not reported as of 30 June 2008. On this basis, OIOS found that the delegated authority given to UNMIS did not have any significant impact in expediting the recruitment process.

**Recommendation 4**

**(4) The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should monitor and address process delays faced by the Human Resources Section and programme managers in recruitment procedures based on established recruitment targets for the timely deployment of staffing resources.**

20. *The UNMIS Division of Mission Support accepted recommendation 4 and stated that UNMIS HR Section has already initiated the implementation of the recommendation by recording all dates pertaining to recruitment action to calculate length of processes and address sources of delays. Sources of delays involving UN Headquarters are being communicated on a weekly basis through the weekly fact sheet and weekly recruitment status report.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 4 has been closed.

Arrivals, departures and staff turnover rates

21. A review of staff checkout records indicated that a total of 504 international staff and 663 national staff left UNMIS over the last three fiscal years from 2005/06 to 2007/08. Among these were 80 international staff and 322 national staff who transferred to UNAMID in fiscal year 2007/08. The average staff turnover in UNMIS was 19 per cent for international staff and 6 per cent for national staff. Staff turnover is the percentage of the number of employee departures in a particular period divided by the average number of staff members employed over the period. Table 4 shows a detailed analysis of staff arrivals, departures and staff turnover rates over the periods.

**Table 4: Staff arrivals, departures and turnover rate**

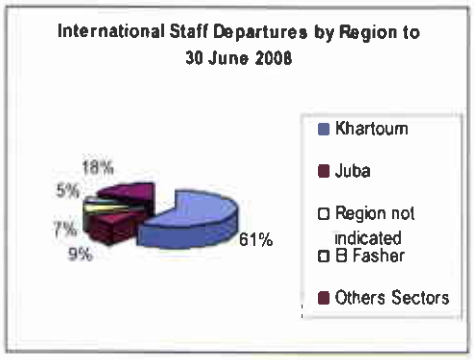
| FY | Staff on board at start of FY (a) | Arrivals (b) | Departures (c) | Departures excl. UNAMID (c** ) | Staff on Board at end of FY (d) =a+b-c | Average Staff on Board (e)=(a+d)/2 | Staff turnover (f) = c/e% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **International** | | | | | | | |
| 2005/06 | 361 | 390 | 80 | | 671 | 671* | 12% |
| 2006/07 | 671 | 337 | 148 | | 860 | 766 | 19% |
| 2007/08 | 860 | 162 | 276 | 196** | 746 | 803 | 24%** |
| **TOTAL** | | **889** | **504** | | | | **19%** |
| **National** | | | | | | | |
| 2005/06 | 272 | 1,237 | 70 | | 1,439 | 1,439* | 5% |
| 2006/07 | 1,439 | 1,212 | 178 | | 2,473 | 1,956 | 9% |
| 2007/08 | 2,473 | 357 | 415 | 93** | 2,415 | 2,444 | 4%** |
| **TOTAL** | | **2,806** | **663** | | | | **6%** |

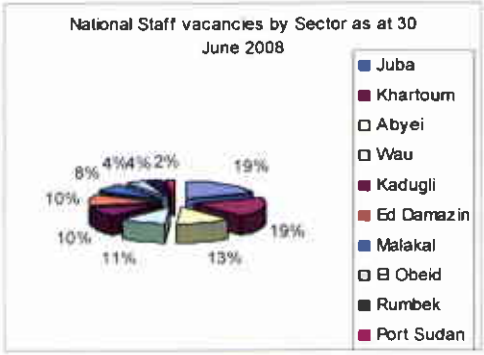
* Average staff estimated based on the 2006/07 staff numbers
** 2007/08 staff turnover is adjusted for UNAMID transfers (International - 80, National - 322)

22. While departures for national staff were fairly consistent and distributed over the regions in the last three years, international staff departures had shown an increasing trend over the same period with departing staff in 2007/08 (adjusted for transfers to UNAMID) exceeding arrivals. Of the 504 international staff departures, 264 (52 per cent) were professional staff, mainly at the P-2 to P-5 levels.

23. An analysis of UNMIS staff departures by region also showed that the highest international staff turnover was at UNMIS Headquarters, accounting for 61 per cent of the total departures, followed by Juba at 9 per cent while the distribution of national staff departures ranged from 2 per cent in Port Sudan to 19 per cent in Juba, as shown in Chart 3.

**Chart 3: Staff departures by region and category**




24. The main reasons for international staff departures in Khartoum and Juba were: (a) reassignment to other missions considered attractive following the relaxation of mobility rules on 18 June 2007 allowing staff to compete for posts in other missions in less than two years on post; (b) return to parent/ duty stations for staff on mission detail following the implementation of General Assembly resolution 59/296 of 15 August 2005 limiting the duration of mission detail to a maximum of two years; and (c) limited welfare and recreation facilities.

**Recommendations 5**

**(5) The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should expedite the completion of recreation facilities for locations experiencing high staff turnover rates to improve staff retention.**

25. *The UNMIS Division of Mission Support accepted recommendation 5 and stated that currently UNMIS has fully operational fitness centers, social club space and libraries in Juba, Kadugli, Wau, Malakal and Ed Damazin. It will complete recreational facilities in Khartoum and Abyei by end of 2009 and expand facilities and improve welfare services in team sites.* Recommendation 5 remains open pending the completion of recreational facilities in Khartoum and Abyei.

## B. Effects of high vacancy rates

Vacancy rates by region and staff category

26. The vacancy management performance indicators established under the 18 February 2008 Human Resource Action Plan (HRAP) for missions set a target vacancy rate for stable missions (such as UNMIS) of 15 per cent for international staff and 5 per cent for national staff. It further encourages missions to build national capacity by making greater use of national staff through conversion of international posts to national posts. Vacancy rates by staff category as at 30 June 2008 indicated that UNMIS did not meet its targets for international professional staff, national professional officers and national staff. As shown in the table 5, the vacancy rates for both the national and international professional staff had far

exceeded targets, which adversely affected the southern regions of Juba, Abyei and Rumbek team sites.

**Table 5: Vacancy rates by region and staff category as at 30 June 2008**

| # | Sector | Vacancy rates | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Professional | Field Service | National Professional Officers | National Staff |
| 1 | Khartoum | 36% | 17% | 18% | 8% |
| 2 | Juba | 41% | 9% | 46% | 12% |
| 3 | Malakal | 38% | 15% | 19% | 12% |
| 4 | Kadugli | 37% | 16% | 15% | 19% |
| 5 | Wau | 25% | 23% | 38% | 17% |
| 6 | Abyei | 50% | 17% | 55% | 39% |
| 7 | Ed Damazin | 25% | 14% | 23% | 16% |
| 8 | Rumbek T/Site | 50% | 36% | 60% | 12% |
| 9 | Logistic bases | 29% | 18% | 33% | 8% |
| **Avg. by staff category** | | **36%** | **15%** | **36%** | **12%** |
| **Target vacancy rates** | | **15%** | **15%** | **5%** | **5%** |

27. Of the 254 vacant posts for international staff, 140 posts (55 per cent) fell within the P-2 to P-4 level, which implied that most of the professional staff functions were being performed by international field service and/or national staff. Vacancy rates in the regions are influenced by factors such as: (a) security situation, as the case in Abyei; (b) lack of qualified national professional officers willing to work in the sectors; (c) English language requirements for national staff in sectors; and (d) high staff turnover rates in the regional headquarters of Juba and Khartoum. In the absence of sufficient professional staff, the Mission cannot effectively accomplish its programmes and mandates, especially in areas with high vacancy rates.

Filling of critical posts

28. The UNMIS senior management recruitment team monitors, on a monthly basis, the filling of key posts and extension of contracts for 36 senior management positions. A separate report on critical posts sent to DFS tracks the incumbency status of 22 senior management positions. OIOS established that at least 15 posts of section chiefs and regional programme coordinators at the P-5 level were vacant and not listed for monitoring. These included the posts of the Chief Transport Officer, Chief Budget Officer and Senior Planning Officer. Discussions with the HR Section in UNMIS revealed that the criterion for determining which posts are considered key was not clear and did not necessarily cover all programme management posts. In this regard, the Mission explained that the P-5 positions of Chief Transport Officer, Chief Budget Officer and others are not considered strategic and therefore not listed in the senior management monitoring list of critical vacancies. OIOS is of the view that these posts are critical to the normal functioning of the related programmes.

29. A further review of sections with vacancies at the programme management level indicated that some programmes were managed at low levels

of responsibility, such as the case of the Transport Section which is currently headed by a staff member at the P-3 level because the P-4 and P-5 (Section Chief) posts for the section had been vacant for a long time. The absence of programme managers in the long term may lead to poor programme performance. For instance, the Property Management Section carried out 21 per cent of asset inspection in fiscal year 2007/08. Other sections experiencing high vacancy rates at critical posts included the Child Protection Section, Radio Unit, Recovery, Return and Reintegration Section, and Accounts Unit in the Finance Section. UNMIS explained that efforts had been made to recruit for some programme management posts without success and that the Mission had noted the effects in regions where local staff had been recruited but lacked professional staff to supervise them. OIOS is of the view that the non-monitoring of certain critical posts at the senior management level could result in underperformance and delays in implementing programmes and mandates.

**Recommendation 6**

**(6) The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should ensure that the monitoring of critical vacancies also includes section chiefs and regional programme coordinators at the P-5 level.**

30. *The UNMIS Division of Mission Support accepted recommendation 6 and stated that it will expand its reporting on critical vacancies/key posts to include all section chiefs and regional programme coordinators at the P-5 level.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 6 has been closed.

## C. Measures for addressing high vacancies

Alternative/other recommended candidates

31. The delegation of recruitment authority to UNMIS dated 27 July 2007 required that programme managers interview a wider range of candidates and recommend at least three alternates for each interviewed post in order to expedite the recruitment process and alleviate the difficulties resulting from declined offers. This is consistent with the standard operating procedure (SOP) on staff selection (paragraph 5.8) which states that the remaining recommended candidates may be selected for future vacancies for the same function and level within the Mission by re-submitting the documentation to FPD without further action, for a period of up to one year.

32. A review of selection procedures in UNMIS showed that programme managers were not familiar with the SOP requirement for selecting alternate candidates. In most cases, no alternate candidates were recommended while in other cases, the alternative candidates were either not selected after the primary candidates declined offers or were recruited for other vacancies (see table 6 below) for which they had not been interviewed.

**Table 6: Declined offers not filled by other recommended candidates**

| Post No. | Section | Position | Level | Date offer declined | Program Manager (PM) actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **(a) Alternative candidates not selected** | | | | | |
| 59346 | RRR | Director RRR | D-1 | 19 May 08 | No recruitment action for the 2nd recommended candidate |
| 55451 | RRR | Senior RRR | P-5 | 17 Mar 08 | 2nd or 3rd recommended not selected, a new recruitment action started. |
| 61671 | JMAC | Information Analyst | P-2 | Jan 08* | Instead, post loaned to Chief of Staff on 2 Apr 08 |
| 56480 | HR/Juba | HR Assistant | FS-4 | 20 Feb 08 | 2nd recommended candidate not recruited |
| 53713 | DMS/Juba | Admin. Assistant | FS-4 | 21 Apr 08 | 2nd or 3rd recommended candidates not recruited |
| **(b) No alternative candidates recommended** | | | | | |
| 59392 | Electoral | Legal Adviser | P-4 | 18 Jun 08 | No alternate candidate |
| 56222 | SRSG/COS | Best Practices Officer | P-4 | 05 Apr 08 | No alternate candidate |
| 59651 | GIS | GIS Officer | P-3 | 02 Jan 08 | No alternate candidate |
| 56256 | Civil Affairs | Civil Affairs Officer | P-3 | 19 Dec 07 | No alternate candidate |
| 59355 | Human Rights | Senior HR Officer | P-5 | 19 Dec 07 | No alternate candidate |
| 56275 | SRSG/Supply | Security Officer | P-3 | 14 Feb 08 | No alternate candidate |
| 56339 | DSRSG-RC/HC | Reporting Officer | P-2 | 29 Dec 07 | No alternate candidate |

[Note * Exact date not provided]

33. Non-compliance with selection procedures for other recommended candidates had not only delayed the filling of vacancies but also contributed to an inefficient recruitment process as it entailed repeating the whole process.

**Recommendation 7**

**(7) The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should ensure compliance with the standard operating procedure on the selection of alternate candidates specifically on filling vacancies whenever primary candidates decline offers or where other vacancies exist at the same function and level.**

34. *The UNMIS Division of Mission Support accepted recommendation 7 and stated that it will encourage selection of alternate candidates wherever possible.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 7 has been closed.

## D. Staffing table and post management

Maintenance of staff records

35. According to the SOP on the staffing table and post management, the Nucleus system is the primary tool to record and track the use of resources in the missions to ensure that they are used for the functions in the staffing table as approved by the General Assembly. UNMIS maintains staff records for international staff in the Nucleus system and keeps separate records in FPMS. These records are aligned with the IMIS system maintained at UN Headquarters.

36. A comparison of staff records in Nucleus and FPMS indicated some differences and errors, as follows:

- Staff records were not accurate with respect to work locations as authorized in the staffing tables. For example, about 34 international departing staff (8 per cent) could not be traced to their respective work location for management analysis of staff turnover.

- The lack of consistent criteria for coding staff departures in FPMS. For example, departing staff from duty stations or parent missions and staff appointments in other missions were indistinctively classified as "return to duty station", "assignment or transfer" or "completion of assignment".

- The total vacancies as at 30 June 2008 according to the Nucleus system were 626 compared to 631 posts per FPMS.

Migration of national staff records to Nucleus

37. In the 18 February 2008 HRAP, DFS required that the staffing table and post management of all national staff positions be henceforth managed in the Nucleus system. UNMIS maintains its national staff records in FPMS. A review of the system functions and records indicated the following shortcomings:

- The system is designed to update records and not keep historical databases. At the date of the audit, there were no historical staffing tables for national staff maintained by the HR Section in either manual or soft copies for management analysis.

- Duplicate records of post numbers encumbered by different staff members in the national staffing table were found and the system could not detect duplicate records (see Table 7). In addition, the series of post numbers for national staff was different in both systems.

**Table 7: Duplicate posts in FPMS staffing table for national staff**

| Post title | FPMS Post | Index No. | Name | Staff location |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Airops Assistant | 731468 | 196080 | Hacia, Dominic | Juba |
| Water & Sanitation Technician | 731468 | 669169 | Modi, Emmanuel | Juba |
| Radio Management Assistant | 731648 | 835148 | Abraham, Wol | Juba |
| Radio Journalist | 731648 | | Seeka, Angelina - | Juba |
| Security Guard | 733691 | 804182 | Ngor, Chol | Abyei |
| Protection Officer | 733691 | 868552 | Abdalla, Hussien | Kadugli |
| Procurement Assistant | 734336 | 638275 | Abdalla, Noon | Khartoum |
| Contracts Assistant | 734336 | | Vacant | Khartoum |
| Aviation Safety Assistant | 734373 | 831519 | Mohammed, Amna | Khartoum |
| Aviation Safety Assistant | 734373 | | –Vacant | Khartoum |
| Civil Affairs Officer | 735301 | | Alradi, Gadallah | Khartoum |
| Civil Affairs Officer | 735301 | 264556 | Tombe, Joel | Juba |
| Public Information Assistant | 736997 | 87891 | Kenyi, Emmanuel | Juba |
| Radio Translator | 736997 | | Mathiang, Peter Bior - | Juba |

38. UNMIS explained that a lot of effort went into cleaning up the staffing tables in 2007/8 but the maintenance of the three databases (FPMS, Nucleus and IMIS) required additional staff to keep them reconciled, pending the development of a comprehensive organization-wide human resources system. Further, local staff records had been updated to the Nucleus system but the process had to be repeated following the change of national staff post numbers by FPD. The Mission had established a reporting and post management unit in its 2008/09 staffing table to update and maintain the HR databases.

**Recommendations 8 and 9**

**The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should:**

**(8) Expedite migration of national staff records into the Nucleus system, in accordance with the Department of Field Support's guidelines to improve system reliability; and**

**(9) Ensure the accuracy and completeness of staff records in the human resource databases for management analysis and reporting.**

39. *The UNMIS Division of Mission Support accepted recommendation 8 and stated that the implementation of the recommendation is currently ongoing to streamline the posts as per budget structure, acquire unique numbers and upload staff data onto the system.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 8 has been closed.

40. *The UNMIS Division of Mission Support accepted recommendation 9 and stated that UNMIS HR Section has completed the clean-up exercise undertaken to realign all the three post/staff related databases, namely Nucleus, FPMS and IMIS. The task was achieved by allocating a staff member fulltime including travel to UN Headquarters to ensure simultaneous action by all concerned parties and close up action/follow-up.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 9 has been closed.

## V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

41. We wish to express our appreciation to the Management and staff of UNMIS for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

ANNEX 1

## STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

| Recom. no. | Recommendation | Risk category | Risk rating | C/ O[1] | Actions needed to close recommendation | Implementation date[2] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should regularly perform an aging analysis of all vacancies to ensure appropriate recruitment action for long-unfilled posts and establish accountability for avoidable delays. | Strategic | High | O | Confirmation from UNMIS that the Human Resources Section is able to generate vacancy aging reports to enable better post management. | 2009 |
| 2 | The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should request the Field Personnel Division at United Nations Headquarters to clear additional candidates for posts lacking suitably qualified candidates to expedite the filling of vacant posts. | Human Resources | Medium | | Action complete | Implemented |
| 3 | The UNMIS Human Resources Section should ensure that recruitment files are properly maintained, archived and contain all the pertinent information supporting the recruitment process. | Information Resources | High | | Action complete | Implemented |
| 4 | The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should monitor and address process delays faced by the Human Resources Section and programme managers in recruitment procedures based on established recruitment targets for the timely deployment of staffing resources. | Human Resources | High | | Action complete | Implemented |
| 5 | The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should expedite the completion of recreation facilities for locations experiencing high staff turnover rates to improve staff retention. | Human Resources | Medium | | Submission of report on the completion of recreational facilities in Khartoum and Abyei. | 2009 |
| 6 | The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should ensure that the monitoring of | Strategic | High | | Action complete | Implemented |

| Recom. no. | Recommendation | Risk category | Risk rating | C/ O[1] | Actions needed to close recommendation | Implementation date[2] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | critical vacancies also includes the following programme management posts: section chiefs and regional programme coordinators at P-5 level. | | | | | |
| 7 | The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should ensure compliance with the standard operating procedure on the selection of alternate candidates specifically on filling vacancies whenever primary candidates decline offers or where other vacancies exist at the same function and level. | Compliance | High | | Action complete | Implemented |
| 8 | The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should expedite migration of national staff records into the Nucleus system, in accordance with the Department of Field Support's guidelines to improve system reliability. | Information Resources | High | | Action complete | Implemented |
| 9 | The UNMIS Division of Mission Support should ensure the accuracy and completeness of staff records in the human resource databases for management analysis and reporting. | Human Resources | High | | Action complete | Implemented |

C = closed, O = open