

The World Bank Development Grant Facility

Evidence-Based Governance
in the Electronic Age

Final Report

1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004



International Records Management Trust

November 2004

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INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the achievements of the *Evidence Based Governance in the Electronic Age Project* between 1 July 2001 and 30 June 2004. It reports specifically on the third and final year of the project and builds on the annual reports submitted in 2002 and 2003. The project website, <http://www.irmt.org/evidence/> provides additional details. The project was a component of a larger project, *Forging Partnerships for Good Governance in Public Expenditure and Records Management*, which is administered by the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Program.

The project addressed a fundamental but little recognised issue: the management of public sector records as evidence for accountability. Through a series of case studies and extensive consultations with stakeholders in developing countries, it explored the consequences of the electronic working environment for the management of records as evidence. It developed a software driven tool for benchmarking records management capacity against international standards and in relation to the management of core government functions.

The basic premise of the project was that the lack of attention to records as authoritative evidence of policies, transactions, activities and entitlements has an impact on wider development objectives (including anti-corruption; administrative and civil service reform; decentralisation; e-government; legal and judicial reform; public expenditure management; tax policy and administration; access to information; and electronic government). The project recognised that managing the records of government activity as evidence for accountability is one of a large number of factors that needs to be addressed in order to achieve effective public administration and the rule of law. It demonstrated, however, that records management is essential and foundational as an enabling infrastructure which provides the basis for public sector integrity. *Managing official records efficiently will not in itself halt corruption and or bring about accountability. However, these goals cannot be achieved without trustworthy evidence.*

The project findings highlighted the fact that that in many developing countries, paper-based records systems have decayed into informality, and as yet there is little capacity or infrastructure for managing fragile digital records as authentic evidence and protecting data integrity over time. Information technologies are being introduced worldwide to enhance government accountability and efficiency, but there has been little attention to the quality and care of the electronic records they create. There is a need to ensure that fragile electronic records are maintained and managed in developing countries where specialist training is lacking.

The present situation creates new opportunities for manipulating government information. It leaves governments vulnerable, without access to the evidence needed to support accountable and transparent democracies. It impedes information and communication technology initiatives and adds unnecessary risks to the significant investments that lenders and donors make in the procurement and implementation of information management software.

The project took a major step toward addressing these issues by developing a software driven records management capacity assessment system that is available free of charge to governments and development planners worldwide free of charge through the project website. The next steps

will be to define functional requirements for information systems to ensure that they capture accurate evidence and to create capacity building materials that can be shared internationally.

OVERVIEW OF THE OBJECTIVES AND DELIVERY OF THE PROJECT

Purpose of the Grant

The purpose of the grant, as stated in the three grant letters (October 3, 2001; September 23 2002; and September 29 2003), was to ‘support the development and dissemination of records management tools and diagnostic exercises’. The letters noted that:

The project aims to coordinate a global network of institutions to define the means of tackling the failure of records systems to provide complete and trustworthy information, particularly in electronic environments. This includes building awareness among records professionals, government officials and donors and lenders; creating tools, based on the International Standard on Records Management, ISO 15489, that will measure the strength of records systems against public sector requirements; and preparing training materials to meet global needs. Ultimately, the aim is to ‘mainstream’ records management on the global development agenda.

Proposed Activities

The grant letters set out the project activities as follows:

Year One

- study Bank and other documentation to assess how record keeping impacts on the Bank’s fiduciary and development objectives
- enhance the Bank’s assessment/diagnostic tools and ‘tools kits’ by seeking means of enhancing/introducing records management components
- develop ‘tool kits’ to help define and introduce record keeping requirements to an appropriate international standard.

Year Two

- study Bank and other documentation to assess how record keeping impacts on the Bank’s fiduciary and development objectives
- enhance the Bank’s assessment/diagnostic tools and ‘tools kit’ by seeking means of enhancing/introducing records management components

- develop ‘tool kits’ to help define and introduce record keeping requirements to an appropriate international standard
- develop a capacity model to deliver effective financial records systems
- refine field testing by trying assessment tools in a range of countries
- produce an awareness-raising video for public officials and development partners, highlighting key issues regarding evidence-based governance in the electronic environment.

Year Three

- develop a Records Management Capacity Model, building on the records management ‘tool kit’ developed during Years One and Two of the project and mapped against the International Records Management Standard (ISO 15489), to deliver effective financial and human resource records management systems
- refine the Records Management Capacity System (RMCAS) software by field testing it in a range of countries
- develop a strategy for creating and introducing the capacity building materials required to underpin the RMCAS and enhance records management capacity internationally.

Management Arrangements

The project fell under the umbrella of the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Program and had objectives that contributed to the overarching PEFA Program. To ensure that the project was fully integrated into the PEFA Program, its task managers were members of the PEFA Advisory Group, and a representative of the PEFA Secretariat was a member of the Project Advisory Group. The Advisory Group represented relevant areas of Bank operations including those responsible for legal and judicial reform, financial management and human resource management. The Information Solutions Group and the World Bank Institute were also represented. Monthly progress reports were submitted to the PEFA Secretariat and included in the Secretariat’s reports.

See Appendices G and H for Project Review Meeting notes. There is a full list of project documentation at Appendix M.

World Bank Task Managers

- Mike Stevens, Public Sector Reform and Capacity Building Unit, Africa Region: July 2001 to December 2003
- Andres McAlister, Information Solutions Group: July 2001 to December 2003
- Gary Reid, Lead Public Sector Specialist and Chair of the Administrative and Civil Service Reform Thematic Group, PREM, December 2004 to October 2004.

Head of PEFA Secretariat

- Richard Allen: July 2001 to July 2003
- Nicola Smithers: July 2003 to October 2004

International Records Management Trust Staff and Consultants

The Trust's core staff worked with internationally recognised experts to deliver the different phases of the project.

- Anne Thurston, the Director of the International Records Management Trust, was the Project Director.
- Andrew Griffin, Deputy Director of the Trust, was the Project Manager for the case studies, the development of the assessment tools and the development of the Capacity Model.
- Ray Bennett, Vicki Lemieux and Kelly Mannix provided professional support in conducting the evaluation of World Bank tool kits and project reference documents.
- Laura Millar, a specialist in records management and education, ably managed the global consultations and contributed the design of the educational materials link within RMCAS
- Sarah Demb, a Trust Project Manager, and Sue Bryant, an electronic records expert, were responsible for the ongoing development of the Records Management Capacity System (RMCAS) as well as the design and implementation of the field testing
- Peter Van Garderen, an electronic records consultant in Canada, made major contributions to the design and development of the Records Management Capacity Model and to RMCAS.
- Justus Wamukoya and Nathan Mnjama, lecturers at the Department of Library Studies, University of Botswana, provided invaluable support in developing and testing RMCAS.

- Andy Lipchak and John McDonald, records and information management experts in Canada, helped to review the content of the Capacity Model and in RMCAS.
- Carol Eden and Fiona Gowen served as project coordinators for different aspects of the project.

Outcome

The project has raised the profile of records management, which now features much more often on the international development agenda than in the past; it made a substantial contribution to development by producing the Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS) software. RMCAS has the potential to enhance the quality of a wide range of development projects if it is used to support pre-project assessments or the design of projects where the quality of information, paper or electronic, is important. It can also be used to benchmark improvement. As the project demonstrated, through the case studies and global consultations, the issues involved in managing records and particularly in making the transition to the electronic environment, are common to all countries. The availability of common solutions that can be mainstreamed into development programmes and the development of government application systems will result in substantial cost savings and greatly reduce the high risk of system misuse and failures.

World Bank staff are considering the manner in which RMCAS could be used within public sector management operations. A PREM Note has been prepared (see Appendix L), and further RMCAS pilots are being planned.

Funding

The list that follows covers funds received for the deliverables described in this report and funds received for projects that contributed to developing the content of the deliverables. A summary of DGF grant expenditure is at Appendix A.

Projects Covered in this Report

Funding Agency	Funds Received	Project Element
World Bank Development Grant Facility	\$1,050,000	Evidence-Based Governance Project core funding
UK Department for International Development	£300,000	Global Discussion Forum, African and Asian programme

Commonwealth Secretariat	£50,000 £7,500 £15,000	Global Discussion Forum, Caribbean and Pacific participation Global electronic discussion Development of the E-Records Readiness Tool
Government of Canada	\$15,000	Information Management to Support Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age
World Bank Governance Knowledge Sharing Programme	\$138,400	Development of RMCAS Software
World Bank Information Solutions Group	\$5,000	Automated Presentation of RMCAS Software

Projects Contributing to the Content of the Deliverables During the Grant Period

Funding Agency	Funds Received	Project Element
UK Department for International Development	£1,106,970	Records Management Improvement Programme, The Gambia
Government of Malaysia	£1,000,000	E-Spark Project: Electronic Records Management Project Quality Assurance
Commonwealth Secretariat	£56,000	Records Management Improvement Project: South African provinces
Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances India	£61,750	Capacity Building for Good Governance: Records Management Training Programme for Government Employees

British Council	£49,000	Enhancing Access to Justice: Improved Court Records, Ethiopia
UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda	£28,000	Legal Records Training for the UNICTR
RIPA	£43,000	RIPA International Training Programme on Computerising Records Management and Managing Computerised Records
Bangladesh Parliament	£24,000	Committee on Recordkeeping Assessment
Government of Trinidad and Tobago	£12,800	Restructuring and Automation of the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago
International Council on Archives	£2,000	Legal Status of Electronic Records in Developing Countries
International Council on Archives, Pacific Branch	£4,800	Records Management Distance Learning

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF DELIVERABLES

All of the project deliverables were achieved. This involved two broad areas of work, which are described below and in earlier reports.

Information Gathering and Awareness Raising Activities (Phases I and II):

Records and information requirements were analysed in a range of developing countries. The aim was to identify the key issues affecting the management of official records in low resource environments, the relationship to core development objectives and the most appropriate way of measuring the existing capacity and infrastructure against international standards. Records management requirements have been little understood, and the project provided opportunities to raise awareness of the significance of records management for development. This involved the following activities:

- Existing World Bank assessment systems, tool kits and project documentation were analysed. An input to the CFAA was suggested. This work is described in the reports for 2001/2002 and 2002/2003.

- Case studies were developed that explored the state of records management in relation to core governance functions. The case studies are described below.
- Global consultations were carried out, focussing on the relationship of records to good governance, electronic government, accountability and access to information. The consultations are described below.

Case Studies

Case studies were carried out as a means of understanding the context for record keeping in relation to three key areas of development: financial management, human resource management and legal and judicial management. The aim was to evaluate records management infrastructure and capacity and the readiness for managing electronic records and to identify issues for managing records in low resource environments.

Case studies were conducted in the following countries:

- *financial management*: Nigeria, Tanzania, Chile, Vietnam
- *human resource management*: India - State of Uttar Pradesh, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Chile
- *legal and judicial process management*: The Gambia, Ecuador, Argentina, Singapore, South Africa

The studies provided an opportunity to evaluate record keeping and information management in a range of administrative contexts and different resource environments. In the majority of cases, computerisation programmes were either in progress or being planned, but there was little evidence of a systematic approach to managing records as part of the transition to the electronic environment. The case studies are available on the project website.

Global Consultations

A Global Forum was organised to help define the needs and concerns of 38 participating English-speaking countries in the Caribbean, Asia, Africa and Pacific regions. The Forum began with a face-to-face meeting in South Africa of the national archivists of the participating countries and educators from their regions to explore the significance of records for good governance, electronic government, transparency and accountability, and access to information. Video conferences were used to link the participants with contributors from Washington, Ottawa, Paris, Delhi, Montevideo and London.

A series of five electronic discussions and nine video conferences then were organised to facilitate regional and global discussions on the same issues between senior records staff and officials responsible for public sector management and reform; a total of nearly 1400 people were involved. These discussions enabled the participants to share experiences and consider

ideas for future action. This was the first time that many of the officials had considered the relationship between governance and records, and yet, there was universal agreement that this was a critical cross-cutting issue for all aspects of governance. One of the key findings was that virtually every participating government, large or small, was involved in introducing ICT applications and planning an ICT strategy, but very few had even begun to consider the requirements for managing electronic records. The participants identified inadequate legal and institutional frameworks, lack of accountability and inadequate training as the major impediments to keeping records as accurate evidence, particularly in the electronic environment.

The Global Forum was an invaluable means of linking records professionals with officials and of exchanging views on capacity requirements. It demonstrated the potential for ongoing awareness raising, consultation and knowledge sharing, and ownership of the complex issues involved in managing records in an electronic environment. It also illustrated the enormous opportunity for sharing learning strategies and maximising the impact of capacity building programmes. The Forum is described in greater depth in the project reports for the first two years of the project and on the project website.

Development of an Assessment Methodology (Phase III)

This involved two principal activities:

- Assessment questions were developed and structured as assessment tools in relation to the three functional areas studied: financial management, human resource management and legal and judicial management. The assessment questions are described below.
- A Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS) was developed in stages to provide a more user friendly assessment methodology that could be mapped against the International Standard on Records Management. RMCAS is described below.

Assessment Questions

The findings from the case studies and the global consultations reinforced the need for an objective methodology for planning a safe transition from a paper-based to an electronic government environment. The aim was to develop assessment tools to diagnose strengths, weaknesses and risk areas in records and information systems (paper and electronic) in each of the three study areas: financial management, human resource management and legal and judicial management.

The assessment tools were essentially logically-structured banks of questions for creators and users of records systems for the three functional areas. There was also a bank of generic questions. The questions were developed based on an examination of Bank project documentation, international standards for records and information systems and other assessment tools and relevant literature. The case studies provided a means of evaluating the questions in various jurisdictions, where officials were invited to comment on the usefulness and clarity of

the questions, to identify gaps and to suggest improvements or additions. Originally, the questions covered only records and information requirements, but based on feedback from Bank staff and discussion with specialists involved in the project, new sections of questions were added that related more directly to the business processes that the records were supporting.

The reasoning was that records and information systems by themselves were not an indicator of the effectiveness of business functions. Rather than look at, for example, whether the records generated and received during judicial processes are filed correctly, it is necessary to ask whether the system of capturing and managing information supports the functions and processes of the courts (such as initiating cases, scheduling cases, conducting hearings, recording evidence, delivering and disseminating judgments, providing management information from statistics). Getting the balance right, so that the questions were not asked in isolation but at the same time did not assess the business functions themselves, was one of the greatest challenges, both in relation to the assessment tools and to the capacity assessment system that subsequently evolved.

Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS)

The assessment tools provided a means of assessing records management capacity and infrastructure, but they were cumbersome to use in a traditional paper format; a more user friendly approach was needed. Moreover, it was clear that it was important to go beyond merely identifying problem areas to indicate pathways for improvement. The aim was to provide stakeholders with the means to evaluate and plan improvements to their records and information systems. It was decided that a software-driven tool should be developed to create a more user friendly tool that could identify strengths and weaknesses and risk areas and links to a database of training and capacity building materials that could be used to plan improvements. Funds were received from the World Bank's Governance Knowledge Sharing Program to develop the software based on the assessment tools. Further development and testing of the tool took place with DGF Funds. The components of the tool were:

- a data-gathering element consisting of assessment questions in structured sequences
- a diagnostic model that maps the data gathered against statements of good practice and capacity levels and formed the basis for analysis
- a linked database of training and capacity building resources for records and information management.

Ultimately, the project created the Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS). Developing the tool involved:

- analysing the International Standard on Records Management (ISO 15489) and extracting good practice statements

- developing a conceptual framework for the Model based on the records ‘lifecycle’ processes described in ISO 15489 and on the Canadian Information Management Capacity Check and the European Model Requirements for the Management of Electronic Records
- building a database to input, store and output requirements and recommendations with source quotations to the relevant standard and linking these requirements to individual questions in the assessment tools
- identifying capacity building material available in the public domain and identifying gaps in the material available
- building a database of capacity-building material mapped to the Model
- developing a software application to link and deliver these components to client-server and stand alone systems.

The Government of Botswana, which has played a leading role in records management in Africa, was an ideal partner in taking the development process forward. The project team worked with Government of Botswana officials and a team of records analysts from Kenya and Canada to evaluate the conceptual structure, assessment questions and core requirements and review them against real requirements in government agencies. Workshops in Botswana in March/April and August 2003 tested the existing ‘banks of questions’ in the assessment tools and confirmed that they could be used to gather the data required, at different levels of detail, to provide a diagnosis of strengths, weaknesses and risk areas in records and information systems. See Appendices B and C for more information on the development of RMCAS.

A *User Guide* was prepared, and the completed software was peer reviewed, first with records experts in Canada, New Zealand, Iceland, Australia and the United Kingdom and with Bank staff, including experts in the fields of financial management, human resource management and legal and judicial management, and then with National Archives and appropriate government agencies in Singapore, Botswana, South Africa, Ghana, Malawi and India. A full pilot assessment was conducted in the Kenya Judiciary (see Appendix D for details of the Kenya pilot test).

Test results and feedback was generally positive and there was a consensus that RMCAS was well-structured and generally user friendly. However, numerous improvements were made based on the feedback received. There was some revision of the core data components, and the *User Guide* was refined to be more meaningful across different cultural contexts and to better support preparation for assessments. The software was upgraded with a focus on usability and functionality. Usability upgrades included making the main screen of the questionnaires ‘cleaner’ by removing some confusing and extraneous buttons, making selection of roles for questionnaires easier to choose, changing references to the culturally-specific ‘records management lifecycle’ to ‘records management processes,’ and making reports simpler and easier to use. The records management capacity training resources database records were also updated. Functionality upgrades included ensuring that all main functions (install, back up and restore) work consistently across different platforms and operating systems and that that RMCAS will work on computers already running versions of SQL server. A small number of programming errors were corrected.

RMCAS can be applied to both paper and digital records and assesses the relationship between manual and electronic systems. In particular, it can determine whether the existing infrastructure, control systems, resources and capacity are adequate to capture and preserve records that are created in the electronic environment. Data gathered from stakeholders can be fed electronically into the Capacity Model (see Appendix B) to produce a high-level three-dimensional graphical representation summarising strengths and weaknesses in relation to international standards, and highlighting areas where capacity building is required. Users will be able to obtain information about capacity requirements and to identify and download appropriate capacity building material to meet specific needs. The database of capacity training materials will also be available online as a separate searchable entity.

RMCAS will enable governments, for the first time, to determine whether the existing infrastructure, control systems, resources and capacity are adequate to capture and preserve records created in the electronic environment. It is designed to be applied flexibly to take account of variations in size of institutions and the administrative contexts in which they operate, as well as developmental and national aspirations.

RMCAS will be available from January 2005 through a link from the project website to the National Archives of the United Kingdom, which has generously offered to host the software. Two other products will be available with the software. An automated presentation on RMCAS, produced in collaboration of Excel-Soft, an Indian company specialising in online education tools, will help to demonstrate the use of the software. A high-level *E-Records Readiness Tool*, designed in partnership with the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat, also will be available to provide an initial risk assessment of e-records readiness at both the national level and the agency-specific level. The tool is a brief questionnaire aimed at providing an overview of the infrastructure and capacity needed to manage records and information and that can be used in conjunction with other E-Government Readiness tools. Where problems are identified that require further analysis, RMCAS will provide the means of conducting a more in-depth evaluation. RMCAS and the accompanying products will also be available in CD-ROM format where bandwidth is too narrow for them to be easily accessible online.

Presentations on the Project

The results of the project have been presented at a number of international events in order to raise awareness of the importance of managing records in relation to development objectives and to obtain feedback on its application. These events were:

- World Bank Institute Workshop on Governance and Records Management, Abuja, Nigeria, August 2003, Andy Lipchak (see Appendices E and F for related materials)
- Records Management Society of Australia, Melbourne, September 2003, Anne Thurston

- SADC Regional Consultation on E-Government Readiness, Gabarone, Botswana, April 2004, Nathan Mnjama and Justus Wamukoya (see Appendix I)
- International Congress on Archives, Vienna, August 2004, Laura Millar
- Association of Records Managers and Administrators International, Vancouver, June 2004, Peter Van Garderen
- ERPANET (Electronic Resource Preservation and Access Network), Antwerp, April 2004, Andy Lipchak
- Society of American Archivists, Boston, August 2004, Boston, Sarah Demb and Thomas Converse, Inter-American Development Bank
- Commonwealth Business Council, London, November 2003, Anne Thurston
- Commonwealth Secretariat, London, September 2004, Anne Thurston
- Brown Bag Lunches, Washington, November 2002, September 2004, Anne Thurston

PROJECT EVALUATION

In keeping with the grant agreement, an independent project evaluation was carried out between January and March 2004 by two senior professionals in the field of records management, Catherine Hare (Bluebell Research Ltd) and Dr Julie McLeod (Northumbria University). The terms of Reference for the evaluation are at Appendix J and the Report is at Appendix K.

The project team considered the report to be fair, but there were some areas that the evaluators did not fully understand because the project had not been completed. Significant testing and development of RMCAS went on after the evaluation and plans have proceeded for approaches to maintaining and updating RMCAS.

An extract from the Executive Summary of the Evaluation Report is provided below.

Key findings

In summary the key findings of the evaluation are that:

- *the project is meeting a need which is acknowledged by the range of stakeholders involved in evidence-based governance in the electronic age*
- *IRMT's reputation and expertise have been key elements in developing the proposal, securing funding, involving a wide range of participants and executing project phases to date*

- *the World Bank's involvement has engaged interest and support for the project in government circles across the world*
- *the project to date has achieved the involvement and active participation of a large number of countries, both large and small, developing and developed*
- *the project has established networks within and across different stakeholder groups through the videoconferences*
- *the tools identified as project deliverables are recognised as important by both sponsors and participants but there is some concern that they may be over complex and that other types of aids are necessary to build capacity and provide the practical help needed*
- *the initial assessments tools were over complex but they have fulfilled an important role as stepping stones in the development of the software tool*
- *the RMCAS tool is a highly imaginative and potentially hugely powerful tool, but it must be completed and sustained*
- *the Training Resources database is an important facility and again potentially very useful but it will be very resource intensive to maintain and without maintenance its value will diminish.*

Conclusion

In conclusion the project is ambitious and hugely challenging, and has achieved so much, first in relation to the project in hand but also for other similar projects. It provides valuable lessons on which to build and, by focusing on the findings of this evaluation, is more likely to deliver what is really required. The evaluators acknowledge the calibre of the work achieved to date and would like to wish the project team every success in completing it.

NEXT STEPS

As the evaluators noted, the long term impact of the project will depend upon follow-up work. Although many governments, donors and lenders are beginning to realise that it is essential to manage records as a basis for integrity in the public service, most do not understand what this involves and there is still a common belief that the issues will be simple to address. The experience of two Asian countries will illustrate the lack of understanding of what is involved. One has invested significant funds in building an electronic records strategy but left the design largely in the hands of commercial IT systems specialists who have almost no understanding of the framework of laws, policies and standards required. The other country has hopes that a two-day training programme will set in motion cascade training that will enable the country to the level that it can manage electronic records. Both assumptions are unrealistic.

RMCAS should be pilot tested in each of the areas that it addresses (financial management, court management and management of the legal and judicial process) in a range of countries. The findings should be presented to the international development community and should include the duration required to conduct assessments, the benefits, the difficulties and the costs. .

At the same time, development work should continue in this areas to enable developing countries to continue to move forward in managing official records as an aspect of public sector reform and as part of the transition to the electronic environment. Key areas for development include:

- 1 *Develop a model strategic framework, with a route map setting out the generic components of the transition to managing records and information in the electronic environment, with the sequence of steps mapped against milestones.* The aim would be to support strategic planning by enabling governments to have a broad view of what is involved, from management responsibilities to developing policies through to capacity building. The route map could be linked to the goals for electronic government, for accountability and transparency, and for human rights and access to information. It should be supported by generic products, for example generic policy statements, policies and good practice materials. Its availability would provide a firm basis for planning effective infrastructures and building capacity.
- 2 *Carry out development research to define an effective means of incorporating records management standards and best practices into information systems.* The aim would be to develop model standards, control methods, system administration guidelines and functional systems specifications aimed at supporting data integrity, authenticity and the longevity of digital records. It would provide a generic set of requirements to enable governments to evaluate application software to ensure that it incorporates functional requirements for capturing and preserving digital records.
- 3 *Create generic capacity-building material to support developing country professionals in managing official records, particularly in the electronic environment where fragile digital records are at considerable risk.* The aim would be to equip records professionals across the developing world to play a vital role in supporting the democratic values of equality, human rights and openness in an increasingly electronic environment. This would involve developing a suite of training modules (and upgrading existing modules) with additional good guidance material and case studies to support a range of training opportunities, including training for trainers, e-learning and distance learning and face-to face training. The training modules are likely to include: Records Management and Electronic Government, Linking Electronic Records to Paper Records, Managing Web-Based and Structured (Database) Records, Managing Unstructured Electronic Records, Establishing Digital Repositories, Digitising Paper-Based Records, Understanding the Legal Environment for Managing Electronic Records, Managing Electronic Records in Relation to Access to Information Requirements, Assessing Electronic Records Readiness, Evaluating Electronic Records Management Products, Strategic Planning and Human Resource Development for Managing Electronic Records.

- 4 *Establish an information centre to raise awareness of these issues, network and disseminate solutions and work with partners to raise awareness of the crucial link between records and human rights.* The aim would be to actively monitor new developments and the emergence of good practice in the management of electronic records and their relationship to development objectives, disseminate a regular digest of information for officials, professionals and citizens' groups, host a series of electronic discussions and video conferences for information professionals, government officials and citizens' groups to explore the requirements for protecting records as evidence of rights. In the longer term, substantial benefits and cost savings would be realised by adapting the deliverables to stimulate and support system integrity in other core areas of government, notably human resource management, court management and land management.

Appendix A

Programme: Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age

Project: World Bank Development Grant Facility (DGF)

Project Dates: 01 July 2003 to 30 June 2004

IRMT Code: 134

Statement Date 1 October 2004

Quarterly Summary of Expenditure by Project Category and Budget Line in US\$

	Forecast Budget \$	Actual Jul-Sep 03	Actual Oct-Dec 03	Actual Jan-Mar 04	Actual Apr-June 04	Actual July – Sept 04	Totals
IRMT Fees							
<i>Fee Days</i>	489	37.0	113	148.5	114.5	76.2	489.2
Fees Costs	293400	22200	67800	89100	68700	45720	293520
Sub-Total	293400	22200	67800	89100	68700	45720	293520
Field testing: tools							
Airfares and transfers	12000	4228	80	1840	2082	1725	9955
Subsistence	13480	3845	0	2821	5063	1191	12920
Evaluation	3720	0	0	129	3866	0	3995
Assessment Tools	12000	0	781	157	2701	10207	13846
Sub-Total	41200	8073	861	4947	13712	13123	40716
World Bank visits							
Airfares and transfers	4700	0	2331	352	615	1134	4432
Subsistence	6700	0	4968	1061	0	511	6540
Sub-Total	11400	0	7299	1413	615	1645	10972
Communications							
Communications	4000	577	890	1008	998	1319	4792
Sub-Total	4000	577	890	1008	998	1319	4792
Total	350000	30850	76849	96467	84025	61809	350000

**Records Management Capacity Assessment System
(RMCAS)**

by Andrew Griffin,
Records Manager, International Monetary Fund

Article to be published in *Archival Science*

Abstract

The Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS) provides a means of assessing records management policies, procedures and resources against established international standards. It uses a diagnostic model, based on the records life cycle, to identify strengths, weaknesses and risk areas and links with a database of training and capacity building materials that can be used to plan improvements. Designed initially to measure records and information systems in the financial management, human resource management and legal and judicial areas, it can also be applied generically. Developed by the International Records Management Trust (IRMT) based in London, the RMCAS software application will be available later in 2004, free of charge, through the Internet or in CD-ROM format. It will be accompanied by an on-line demo and tutorial.

RMCAS can be applied flexibly to take account of variations in size of institutions and the administrative contexts in which they operate, as well as developmental and national aspirations. It can be applied to both paper and digital records and assesses the relationship between paper and electronic systems. In particular, it can determine whether the existing infrastructure, control systems, resources and capacity are adequate to capture and preserve records that are created in the electronic environment.

Introduction

The International Records Management Trust, working in partnership with the World Bank, has developed a Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS) as an objective means of assessing, against international standards, the strengths and weaknesses of records management systems. RMCAS comprises three components, shown in Figure 1:

- a data-gathering element consisting of assessment questions in structured sequences
- a diagnostic model which maps the data gathered against statements of good practice and capacity levels
- a database of training and capacity building resources for records and information management.

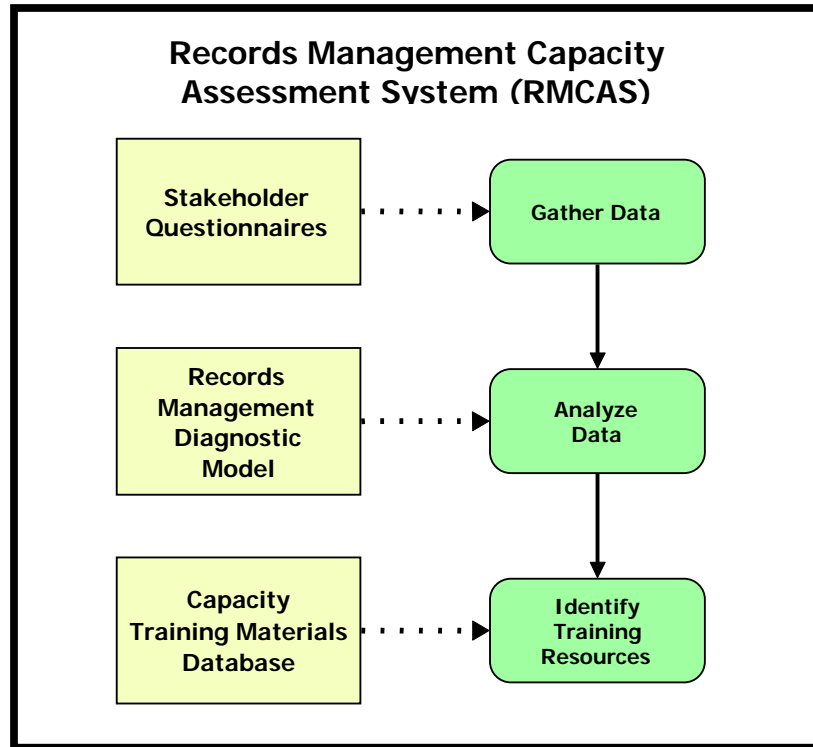


Figure 1

Many archives, records and information specialists have helped with the development of RMCAS. Major contributions have been made by Anne Thurston and Sarah Demb, Director and Project Manager respectively of the International Records Management Trust, Justus Wamukoya and Nathan Mnjama of the University of Botswana, Don McGee of Library and Archives Canada, and Peter Van Garderen, John McDonald, Sue Bryant, Laura Millar, Andy Lipchak, Vicki Lemieux and Ray Bennett, independent consultants. Others have been involved and much of what follows is based on the work of many people. However, any lack of clarity and inaccuracies in this article are entirely my responsibility.

This article traces the conceptual development of the Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS) and explains how it can be used. The RMCAS software will be available later this year in an easily accessible format, free of charge, through the Internet or in CD-ROM format, and will be accompanied by an on-line demo and tutorial.

The creation of RMCAS is part of the International Records Management Trust's ongoing commitment to support governments and public sector organizations in finding new approaches to records management improvement. Over the past fifteen years, the Trust has played a key international role in developing systems for managing records as the essential evidence of public sector activities, particularly in relation to accountability and the protection of citizens' rights, the management of state resources and the improvement of government services. The rapid growth of information technology has presented major challenges for capturing and preserving fragile digital evidence over time. In this increasingly complex environment, the Trust's aim in developing RMCAS has been to provide a means not only of evaluating whether the

infrastructure of laws, organizational structures, policies, processes and facilities exist to manage records effectively, but also of providing a methodology to identify problems and begin to plan solutions.

The development of RMCAS was undertaken as part of a Trust project, *Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age*, initially funded by the World Bank. The Trust had previously conducted original research work to demonstrate the relationship between records management, financial management and accountability¹. One of the aims of the *Evidence-Based Governance* project was to build on this initial work and develop tools to diagnose problem areas and indicate pathways for improvement, taking into account organizational capacity.

RMCAS can be applied flexibly to take account of variations in the size of institutions and the administrative contexts in which they operate, as well as developmental and national aspirations. It is designed to be useful in countries where resource constraints demand practical and realistic solutions. Work to date has focused on financial, human resource, and legal and judicial records, and the intention is to add land and health care records if these efforts can be funded. However, the application can also be used generically to determine whether other records in other sectors are managed in terms of the infrastructure and control systems needed to protect them, and to meet business, legal and administrative requirements. RMCAS can be applied to both paper and digital records, and can be used to assess the relationship between paper and electronic systems. In particular, it can determine whether the existing infrastructure, control systems, resources and capacity are adequate to capture and preserve records that are created in the electronic environment.

RMCAS can produce a variety of reports in various formats, including a high-level three-dimensional graphical representation that summarizes strengths and weaknesses in records management infrastructure and systems. The graphic can be used to highlight where capacity building is required in relation to the life cycle or continuum of records, from creation and capture, through active life, to preservation as archives or ultimate destruction. It can also be used to highlight where capacity building may be needed in relation to the institution's environment of policies, processes, skills and resources. Figure 2 shows a fictitious example of a graphical representation. Further explanation of the graphic is provided later in this article. RMCAS also supports a database of capacity building resources that can be used in conjunction with the assessment to identify solutions and to help plan strategies for improving records and information management.

¹ *From Accounting to Accountability: Managing Accounting Records as a Strategic Resource*. Research project funded by the World Bank *infoDev* program, 2000-2001.
See <http://www.infodiv.org/projects/government/257accountability/index.htm>

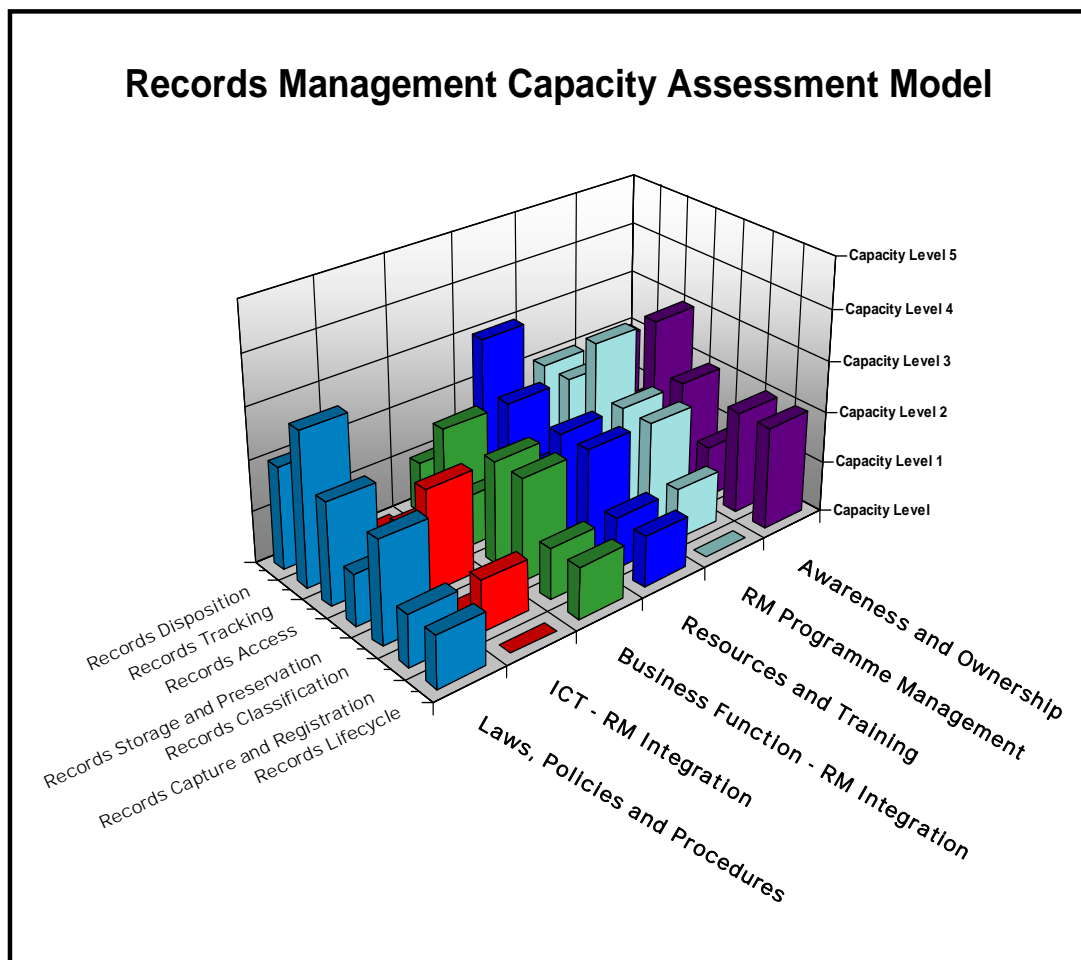


Figure 2

The focus of RMCAS is on records as ‘evidence’ and records management processes to underpin efficiency and accountability, good business practices and good governance. The conceptual basis is the records management lifecycle or continuum and organizational competencies, explicitly linked to standards and best practice sources. Assessment are scalable and flexible and can be carried out by one records manager in one sitting or by a comprehensive series of interviews with a range of stakeholders over a period of time.

In the following sections, the three components of RMCAS - assessment questions, diagnostic model and database of capacity building materials - are described in more detail. Following this description of the components, the RMCAS methodology is explained.

Assessment Questions

The assessment questions were developed through an examination of international standards for records and information systems, a variety of assessment tools for measuring records and

information management, and other relevant documentation such as literature on international development projects. In parallel with development of the questions, the International Records Management Trust conducted thirteen case studies of records and information systems used in support of financial management, human resource management and judicial/court functions. The purpose was to explore requirements for managing electronic and paper records in a range of countries with different administrative systems and traditions².

The studies provided an opportunity to evaluate record keeping and information management in a range of contexts and resource environments. In the majority of case studies, computerization programs were either in progress or being planned. The studies were therefore of particular value in helping to define requirements for electronic and hybrid paper/electronic environments. They also illustrated that, as archivists and records managers well know, sufficient attention is often not paid to the management of electronic records over time. In many countries there is great pressure to computerize business functions, but the planning and design of new systems rarely takes account of the need to maintain reliable, authentic and legally verifiable records in digital form.

During the case studies, drafts of assessment questions were reviewed with selected officials, national archives staff and development project managers in the countries visited, and a preliminary testing of the questions was conducted. Findings from the studies were used to refine the questions and make them sufficiently generic to have relevance to a wide range of administrative contexts, organizational levels and stages of development. Key findings of the legal and judicial case studies are summarized in Table 1 below for purposes of illustration.

Key Issues Identified by Legal and Judicial Records Case Studies

the importance of having a high level ‘champion’ within the courts to promote good practice in records and information management

the need for professionally trained records managers within judiciaries

the need for formal training and training materials in judicial records and information management

the importance of having expert advice and guidance available to those with responsibility for records and information management in the courts

the need to raise the status and priority of recordkeeping

the need to allocate greater resources to supporting recordkeeping infrastructure, for example, storage facilities and equipment (for paper and electronic records)

the need to develop records management policies and standards, for example in relation to access to and long-term preservation of paper and electronic records

the recognition that computerized case management systems have the capacity to improve case flow management and access to information, but the danger of regarding computerization as a means of solving

² Case studies were carried out in 2002 in Argentina, Burkina Faso, Chile (two), Ecuador, the Gambia, India, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, Tanzania (two) and Vietnam. Reports of all thirteen case studies will be made available on the Trust’s website in due course.

<p>all management, resource and information problems</p> <p>the need for an information strategy and business case, based on the requirements of all key stakeholders, before embarking on the computerization of case administration</p> <p>the value of pilot computerization projects to build confidence and capacity</p> <p>the importance of standardized formats and templates for common documents</p> <p>the need for consistent and authoritative instructions on the preservation or destruction of court case records (both paper and electronic).</p>
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Table 1

Assessment questions were designed for the three sectors examined in the case studies: financial management, human resource and payroll management, and courts/delivery of justice. Each sector required a tailored set of records and information management questions drawn from a common pool, as well as questions more directly linked to, and specifically designed for, the business processes of the sector. In addition, a generic set of questions was created from the common pool to provide an assessment in any sector, without reference to the business processes.

It is important to understand why assessment questions were developed not only in relation to records and information requirements, but also to the business processes that records support. Examination of records systems is not by itself always an indicator of the effectiveness of the systems. Rather than examine whether the records generated and received during a judicial process are filed correctly, it is necessary to ask whether the system of capturing and managing information supports the functions and processes of the courts (initiating/capturing new cases, scheduling cases, conducting hearings, recording evidence, delivering and disseminating judgments, providing management information from statistics, etc). A court case tracking system may capture good quality data about each new case, but if there are ineffective mechanisms to record the changing status of a case as it proceeds through the judicial process, the record keeping system fails in its purpose. Similarly, if records of receipts and payments are captured reliably in an accounting system but are kept in such a way that they are inaccessible for audit purposes, the record keeping system will have failed.

Data about business processes has to be gathered to determine whether records systems support their effective execution. Furthermore, business systems must have records management functionality built in if they are to capture and preserve authentic and reliable evidence of transactions. Table 2 below illustrates the organization of assessment questions for human resource records and information management systems and shows the inclusion of business functions and processes.

Assessing Human Resource Records and Information Management Systems

The Assessment questions are divided into two categories: the first concerns the environment in which records are managed; the second is more directly related to the human resource management function.

Management Environment

The questions focus on the overall framework of laws and regulations, policies and systems that determine how records and information should be managed and the resources and capacity needed to manage them.

- Public Service Overview
- Legal and Institutional Framework for Managing Records and Information
- Responsibilities for Records and Information Management
- Policies and Standards, Procedures and Facilities and Maintenance
- Training and Competencies
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Systems

Business Functions and Processes

These questions focus on the relationship between human resource management functions and the records that support them.

- Tracking Posts and Numbers of Employees
- Recruitment, Promotion and Transfer
- Career Paths and Training
- Payroll Administration
- Individual Performance Management
- Service Standards and Measurement
- Enforcement and Disciplinary Issues
- Downsizing

Table 2

Statements of Good Practice

RMCAS measures data, gathered by means of the assessment questions, against the requirements of good practice, as defined by recognized standards or models. The term ‘good practice’ is used rather than best practice as it is recognized that there is no single records management model to fit all organizations. Particularly at the higher levels of capacity, it is crucial that records management systems match the objectives, functions and values of the organization. In addition, records management systems are not static, but must be adapted or replaced over time to meet changing business requirements. For example, information sharing objectives, or the requirements of access to records, may well change as a result of new legislative or governance

initiatives. The new objectives may only be achieved by changing or redesigning records management systems.

As the assessment questions were refined, the Trust began to develop core statements of good practice for records and information management against which the responses to questions could be evaluated. The Trust worked closely with the Government of Botswana and a team of records professionals from the United Kingdom, Kenya, Canada and Botswana to review and test the data-gathering questions and examine the scope for using international standards as a basis for good practice statements. Initially, the focus was on the International Standard ISO 15489, *Information and documentation - Records management*. Workshops were held in Botswana in March and August 2003 to test the questions, to analyze ISO 15489 as a baseline for good practice and to map questions to the standard. These workshops represent milestones in establishing the conceptual basis of RMCAS.

From the beginning, it was recognized that the questions and good practice statements would be cumbersome to use in hard copy form. Funding was sought and secured from the Governance Knowledge Sharing Program (GKSP) at the World Bank to build custom-designed software to support and simplify the assessment process. The aim was to streamline the selection of appropriate questions and the analysis of responses and to make the Framework more efficient, robust and capable of being used at different levels of detail and different organizational levels.

To date, three standards or models have been analyzed and used as the basis for deriving statements of good practice. Each good practice statement used by RMCAS is linked to one or more source quotations in the standards or models. Statements have been derived from the following sources:

- The International Standard on Records Management (ISO 15489), issued in 2001. This provides the basis for determining the elements that make up the records management life cycle or continuum. The standard covers issues relating to the regulatory environment, the key components of records management programs, responsibilities of stakeholders and the design and implementation of records systems. Its main strength is that it analyses records management processes in terms of the life cycle processes (eg, creation or capture, registration, classification, access, disposition). It is intended to apply to records in all formats and provides a standard for the building blocks or essential foundations for records management.
- The National Archives of Canada's Information Management Capacity Check (IMCC), published in 2002. This methodology was designed for the use of departments and agencies of the Federal Government of Canada to assess their information capacities. It provides a good fit with the ISO 15489 in that it focuses primarily on organizational, management and user requirements, rather than exclusively on the individual stages of the records management process.
- The European Commission's Model Requirements for the Management of Electronic Records (MoReq). As a model specification of requirements for Electronic Records Management Systems (ERMS), MoReq is useful in preparing for, specifying or auditing

and checking an ERMS. Analysis of MoReq and extraction of statements of good practice ensured that the management of records and information in the electronic environment was more comprehensively covered.

Capacity Levels

In common with other models, RMCAS identifies five levels of capacity or ‘maturity’. The purpose of the levels is to identify the current status of records management capabilities, provide building blocks for improvement, and isolate prerequisites for strengthening systems and improving capacity. Use of five levels offers the scope to define transformation in incremental stages from a poor records management environment to a far more mature and comprehensive one. A five-level model also provides the potential to map to other models, for instance in the areas of financial management or human resource management³.

In creating capacity levels for RMCAS other models were investigated, most notably the Financial Management Capability Model developed by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada. This model is intended to be a self-assessment tool for use in assessing the level of financial management in government institutions and to provide institutions with a ‘road map’ for improvement. The feasibility of developing such a model for records management was investigated by John McDonald in 2002⁴. McDonald concluded that the Financial Capability Model could be adapted for use in developing a similar model for records management and he proposed a set of cumulative ‘maturity levels’ that the Trust used as the starting point for defining the RMCAS capacity levels.

Just as there is no one records management model to fit all organizations, so there may be different pathways to reach an objective when planning records management improvements. Nevertheless, there are certain fundamental requirements that need to be in place at different levels of capacity. The purpose in measuring records and information management against good practice requirements is to determine whether the building blocks are in place to enable higher capacity levels to be achieved.

RMCAS also recognizes that there is no clear-cut step up from a paper-based level to an electronic level. Electronic systems cannot simply be built over dysfunctional paper systems, and few organisations anywhere have moved successfully from wholly paper to digital records in one step. Parallel or complementary paper and electronic systems may need to co-exist, with linkages between the manual and electronic components. Furthermore, paper and electronic systems may serve the same purpose and perform to the same standard. In such cases, RMCAS places the systems at the same level. There is no reason why a well-functioning registry system that captures incoming records, files them accurately, retrieves them when needed and tracks them while in use, should not be at the same level as an electronic filing and tracking system that

³ Strictly speaking, there are six levels if the base or zero level (absence of records management policies, systems and processes) is included.

⁴ ‘The Financial Capability Model and the Records Management Function: An Assessment’ funded by the National Archives of Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada and the Treasury Board Secretariat Canada and published by the Public Policy Forum of Canada in 2002. See <http://www.forumpp.ca>

performs the same functions. However, if the registry system fails to capture records created and held electronically or on paper, it must be placed at a low capacity level than a system that captures both.

At the lowest level of capacity in RMCAS, records management policies, systems and processes are virtually non-existent, informal, *ad hoc* or ineffective. At the highest level, an organization should have in place a 'knowledge management environment' used effectively to support all business functions and increasingly stringent governance objectives. As well, at the highest capacity level, advanced technology systems and networks should enable effective communication, collaboration and information sharing within the organization and with external stakeholders.

Moving up through the capacity levels may be as much a function of integrating records and information management with business processes, and with corporate and governance objectives, as it is a result of adopting technological solutions. Clearly, however, there are also functions that cannot be carried out unless records are created and managed using computer systems, for example, access across repositories using keywords or controlled vocabulary, simultaneous access to the same information by multiple users, or the management of complex access permissions according to pre-defined user groups. At the highest level of capacity an organization creates a record once and allows all stakeholders to access the information in the record according to their needs and permissions.

Within RMCAS, the capacity levels are defined as follows:

- Level 0: Records management policies, systems and processes are non-existent or informal/*ad hoc*/personal and ineffective. There is little or no use of ICT for creating or managing records.
- Level 1: Basic records management policies, systems and processes are defined but are not consistently and effectively applied across the organization. There is little or no connection between records management and business functions. There is little or no effective use of ICT for managing records.
- Level 2: Key records management policies, systems and processes are in place across the organization and are working. The organization recognizes the need to link records management policies, systems and processes to business functions but has not yet achieved this. ICT is used for records and information management but its effectiveness is limited.
- Level 3: Records management policies, systems and processes are in place across the organisation, are working effectively, are linked to business functions and support organizational management goals. A mixture of ICT and paper systems is used in the creation and management of records and information.
- Level 4: Records management policies, systems and processes are in place, applied effectively, are integrated with all business functions and support organizational governance and accountability. Policies, systems and processes are reviewed and

improved regularly. Extensive use is made of ICT to create, manage and exploit records and information.

- **Level 5:** A knowledge management environment is in place and used effectively to support all business functions and governance objectives and the needs of all stakeholders. A learning culture exists in which monitoring, compliance and improvement takes place continuously. Advanced technology systems and networks are used for the creation and sharing of records and to enable effective communication and collaboration within the organization and with other partners.

Level 0 represents the absence of good practice, but it is unlikely that any organization will score zero in all areas. Similarly, the top capacity level is an aspiration, and no organization will score 5 in all areas. Few if any organizations anywhere in the world are at level 4 across the board, and it is likely that many public sector organizations in the developed world are currently at levels 2 to 4. Developing countries are more likely to be at levels 1 or 2 unless they have undergone a records management improvement program.

ISO 15489 was the main source for defining good practice at Levels 1 and 2 and some of 3. Good practice statements derived from IMCC are spread across all levels, but tend to cluster at levels 2 to 4 as they deal with, for example, organizational culture, strategic planning and change management. Statements derived from MoReq also mainly populate levels 2 to 4.

Diagnostic Model

The diagnostic model, as illustrated in Figure 1, is the conceptual core of RMCAS. It also provides a top-level report generated by RMCAS, based on the data gathered and assessed against good practice.

The three axes of the model represent:

- a stage of the records management life cycle (eg, records capture and registration, classification, storage and preservation)
- a particular aspect of the organizational environment in which records are managed (eg, laws, policies and procedures, ICT infrastructure, training and resources)
- a level of capacity on a scale of 0 to 5.

At each intersection of the three axes is a cell populated by a statement (or statements) of good practice. The assessment questions are mapped to these statements of good practice. The response to a question or group of questions determines whether or not a statement of good practice is achieved and helps to build up a picture of strengths and weaknesses. Good practice statements may be linked to more than one life cycle element and management environment category in the diagnostic model; but statements can only be assigned to one capacity level. Thus, the answer to one question may contribute data to more than one cell in the diagnostic

model but only to cells at the same capacity level. A simple example of how the diagnostic model works is illustrated in Table 3.

Diagnostic Model: Methodology
<p>Statement of Good Practice (capacity level one):</p> <p>Disposition schedules (formally approved schedules of classes or series of records, retention periods and appropriate disposition actions) are maintained and approved by senior management and an external records disposition authority.</p> <p>Assessment Question:</p> <p>Are records that are transferred to semi-current or inactive storage (paper and electronic) always given a disposal action (eg, a destruction or review date calculated from the date of the record or date of transfer)?</p> <p>Possible Responses:</p> <p>Yes → statement of good practice met</p> <p>No → statement of good practice not met</p> <p>A 'yes' response may lead to follow up questions that drill down into the area of questioning.</p> <p>A 'no' response may indicate that no further questions are required in this area to establish the capacity level.</p>

Table 3

Tables 4 and 5 below provides definitions of the elements that make up the organizational environment and records life cycle components of RMCAS and that are indicated in the diagnostic model.

Diagnostic Model: Organizational Environment Elements

The organizational environment elements comprise the management and user context in which records and business functions take place.

Laws, Policies and Procedures: Rules that proscribe how records management and business functions must or should be carried out in the organization.

ICT – RM Integration: The degree to which ICT is used to support records management processes and records throughout their lifecycle.

Business Function – RM Integration: The degree to which records management is integrated with normal business functions.

Resources and Training: The sufficiency of the budget for a records management program, and trained staff to carry out all required tasks, proper facilities and equipment, and sufficient supplies. Training and support for records creators and users.

Records Management Program Management: Records management as a key function of an organization's planning and work programs. Includes, for example, monitoring and evaluation of records systems and resources.

Awareness and Ownership: Awareness of records management in the organization, including senior management buy-in and support for the records management program and initiatives. It indicates organizational commitment and staff willingness and ability to integrate records management activities in business functions.

Table 4

Diagnostic Model: Records Management Processes

Each life cycle process represents a discrete component of the records management continuum. The whole 'life cycle' is also used as an element in its own right when an activity relates to the entire spectrum of the processes listed below.

Records capture and registration: Allocation of explicit metadata embedded in, attached to or associated with the specific record regardless of format, arranged in a logical structure or sequence which facilitates subsequent use and reference and provides evidence of the existence of records in a records system. Capture and registration may occur simultaneously with records creation.

Records classification: Records classification systems reflect business activities and provide linkages between individual documents to provide continuous documentation of activity. Classification is consistent, assists in records retrieval, security and access and with determining retention periods and disposition actions for records. May occur at the time of records capture.

Records storage and preservation: Records are stored on media that ensures their reliability, authenticity and usability for as long as they are needed. Records are stored in proper conditions that protect against unauthorized access, loss or destruction, and theft and disaster.

Records access: The regulation of access to what records, by whom, and in what circumstances. The access environment may include privacy, security, freedom of information and archival legislation. Access may relate to monitoring of user permissions and functional job responsibilities.

Records tracking: Tracking of movements and use of records to identify outstanding action, enable records location and retrieval, prevent loss of records, monitor records use, maintain an auditable trail of records transactions and identify the operational origins of individual records where systems may have been amalgamated or migrated.

Records disposition: Disposition authorities (such as records retention schedules) governing the removal of records from operational systems in a systematic and routine basis in the course of normal business activity. Disposition may encompass physical destruction, retention for a further period within the business unit, transfer to an appropriate storage area or medium under organizational control, transfer to a third party storage facility, or transfer to an organizational or external archives.

Table 5

Database of Capacity Building Materials

The third component of RMCAS is the database of training and capacity building materials, such as courses, manuals, textbooks, guidelines, generic specifications, case studies and risk management methodologies. Users of the software can ‘point and click’ on cells in the diagnostic model to obtain information about capacity requirements in specific areas, and to identify and download appropriate material.

Between August 2003 and February 2004 work was undertaken to design, develop and populate the training resources database. General editorial standards were developed and potential sources in records and archives institutions and professional groups, primarily in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, were reviewed. Further work is planned to examine other resources including, for example, the websites of national archives in African, Asian, Caribbean and European countries. Some African sources, mainly in print-based journal articles, have already been included in the database.

FUTURE ACTION FOR UPDATING THE DATABASE

The first priority for future work on the database is likely to include the identification and entry of the following two types of resources:

- practical resources such as guidelines, manuals and directives available through the websites of National Archives
- manuals, modules, textbooks and other educational monographs available free or at cost through national institutions, national or international associations, and other agencies.

Thereafter, the following resources have been recommended for inclusion:

- educational institutions offering records and archives courses
- monograph publications on records and archives issues
- journals, newsletters, and bulletins.

Currently, there are gaps in the resources available on some topics, particularly in managing function-specific records such as those that relate to human resource management, judicial management and financial management. Future detailed analysis of potential resources outside of the archives and records management profession may reveal other relevant material to be added.

There may also be a need to develop new training resources. Many guidelines and directives exist for the management of records but practitioners, particularly in developing countries, may have difficulty in using these documents directly for ‘self-study’ and capacity building. The International Records Management Trust, as part of its Management of Public Sector Records

(MPSR) program, has already developed a set of 18 self-study training modules and associated best practice procedures manuals and case studies. These have been distributed widely and are also available free of charge on the Trust’s website (www.irmt.org). The Trust plans to expand and revise these materials and is seeking ways to fund this work. All of the Trust’s modules will be included in the database of resources.

Using the Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS)

The RMCAS User Guide provides details of technical requirements, download and install information and a detailed description of the software tool and how to use it. Guidance on preparing for an assessment using the tool is also included.

As already noted, RMCAS allows users to gather data about records and information systems, analyse the data to identify strengths, weaknesses and major risks, and then link to and select from training and self-study resources to build records management capacity in high-risk or sub-optimal areas. Data is gathered through questionnaires generated by the software and tailored to particular stakeholder groups, such as senior management and decision-makers, records management staff, ICT staff and record creators/users. A sample screen shot is shown in Figure 3.

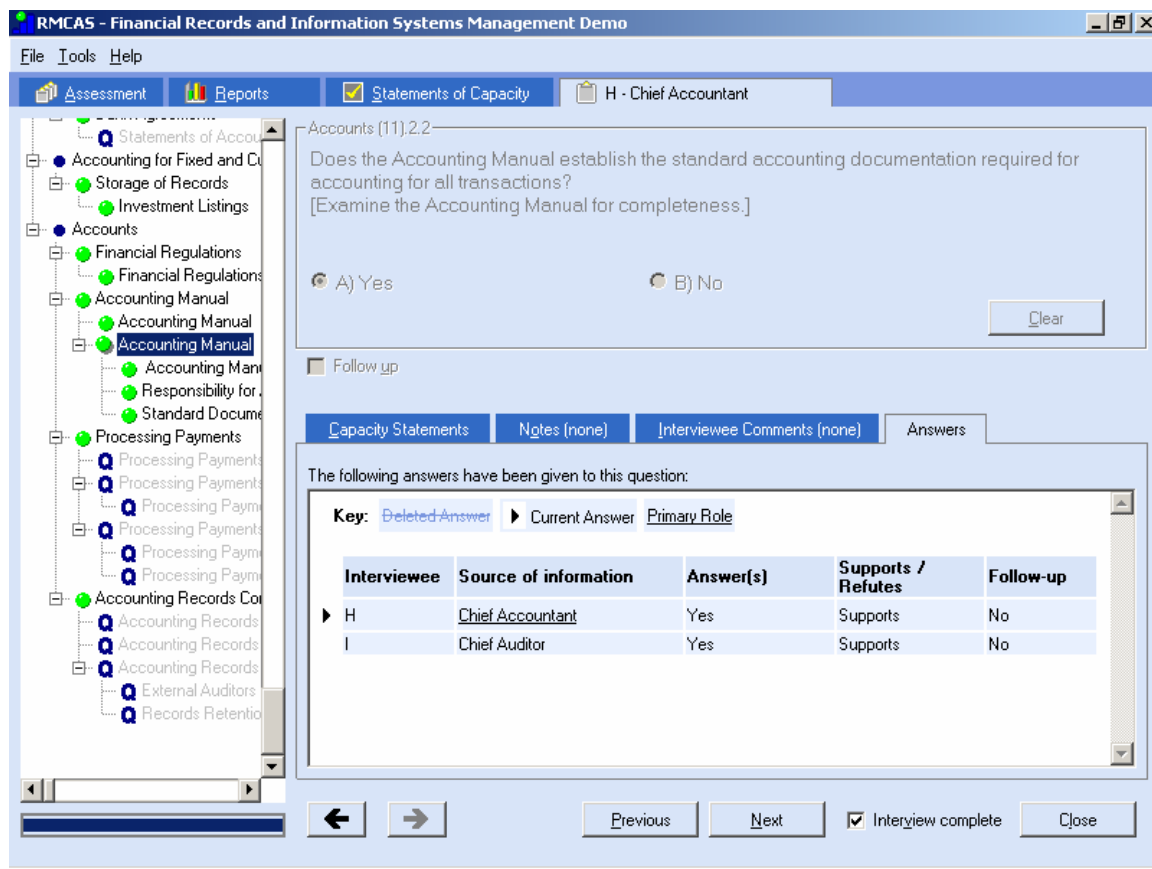


Figure 3

Within RMCAS, the questions are designed as logical sequences with yes/no responses or a choice of a limited set of options in 'tick boxes' that can easily be scored to determine whether good practice criteria have been met. The scores are then linked electronically to the diagnostic model. There is a provision for inputting additional contextual information from both the interviewee and the interviewer to allow for future follow-up analysis or to qualify an answer that may need elaboration. A particular response also determines whether the rest of the sequence should be asked or whether the assessor should move on to the next sequence of questions.

Each question is associated with a primary source of information (for example, senior manager, head of business unit, head of records function or records officer). There are provisions in place to address the issue of credibility of the respondents/interviewees. The same question may be asked of more than one interviewee to corroborate information. For each question, the original answers from each respondent is preserved, but if the assessor has doubts about the accuracy of the answers, he or she has the ability to override the 'yes/no' score for a given statement of good practice in the final calculation of the capacity levels.

Data may be supplemented by relevant documentation, such as policy statements and guidelines, gathered before or during use of the questionnaires. The RMCAS software prompts the assessor to note whether documentation exists to verify the response. For example, retention schedules provide the verification of disposition rules and can be inspected if need be. For Financial Management Records and Information Systems, the following documentation may be sought and reviewed.

Documentation for Financial Records and Information Management

Laws and Policy Regulations

- organisation mission statement
- legislation that deals specifically with the mandate of the organisation and financial responsibilities
- policy documents that reflect financial policy, management and regulations
- financial instructions

Rules, Procedures and Manuals

- accounting manual or other procedure manuals for financial management including payments, receipts, cheque issuing guidelines, etc
- procedure manuals for on line financial systems (data preparation and entry guidelines)
- records retention and disposition schedules for financial records

Sample Documents

- ledgers
- way book
- print out of ledger by vote code and batch code/voucher
- payment cash books
- summary cash books

input batch control forms salaries and allowances cash book register of documents received voucher control forms way book of rejected vouchers local purchase orders LPO register other business related information that supports financial decisions (eg memorandum) vote charge book

Table 6

CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS

In conducting an assessment, the assessor or assessment team will need to brief the key people and/or a facilitator within the unit or organization being assessed. It may be necessary to brief other officials, committees or project staff involved in records and information management. The assessors should continue to liaise with the facilitator to arrange for interviews and provide more information as necessary. Documentation should be collected and studied before the interviews begin. This should include relevant laws, policies, regulations, manuals, system documentation and other materials.

During the initial preparations, the assessment team will familiarise itself with the organization, its management and record keeping infrastructure and control systems. Knowledge of the activities of the organization and its structure, record keeping systems, relevant computer applications, operational areas and records storage areas is essential to the overall success of the assessment. Understanding the operational context of recordkeeping systems will provide the assessment team with vital information that it can use during the interviews to help clarify questions and assess and record responses. For instance, if the information given during the interviews gives a very different picture from the information gathered from the documentation and the on-site observation, it may be necessary to re-evaluate the documentation or override some of the responses in the interviews.

If the organization has more than one location, the assessment team will need to understand its decentralised structure and examine a range or sample of the units.

Questionnaires can be printed and/or distributed electronically prior to the interview if this is helpful. The length of the interview is approximately one hour. Interviewing one stakeholder at a time provides the best results, but group interviews can be used if time is short. It is important for the assessment team to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible are heard.

It is recommended that two members of the assessment team should conduct the on-site interviews. This arrangement allows one member to focus on the interview and the other member to record issues arising from the interview.

Table 7 provides examples of the staff at different levels of an organization that could be interviewed in an assessment.

Staff to be Interviewed in an Assessment				
Level of Position	Financial Assessment Tool	Human Resources Assessment Tool	Legal and Judicial Assessment Tool	Generic Assessment Tool
Head of Agency	Head of Finance	Head of Personnel Auditor General Head of Pension Administration Head of Public Service Head of Treasury	Senior Court Officials, eg Senior Registrars Senior Judicial Administrator	Head of Agency
Senior Manager	Chief Accountant Chief Auditor Senior Administrator Head of Records Function	Head of Records Function Head of Payroll Head of Recruitment Body Head of Planning Senior Administrator	Prosecuting Authority	Head of Department Head of Records Function Senior Administrator
Middle Manager	Accounts Manager Budget Manager Contract Manager Middle Manager as records user	Middle Manager as records user	Lawyers Registrars Secretaries Clerks of Court	Middle Manager as records user
Officer	Accountant Budget officer Debt Mgmt Officer Finance Officer ICT System Administrator IT Officer Senior records users Spending Officer National Archives (archivist)	ICT System IT Officer Administrator Senior records users Staffing Officer* Compensation Officer* Training and development Officer* Records Officer National Archives (archivist)	ICT System Administrator IT Officer National Archives (archivist) NGOs representing civil society Other court records creators or users not covered elsewhere	ICT System Administrator IT officer National Archives (archivist) Senior records creators or users not covered elsewhere

Table 7

ANALYZING AND PRESENTING THE ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The assessment data feeds electronically into the diagnostic model generating the 3-dimensional graphic that plots a high-level overview of the organization’s record-keeping performance (see Figure 1). The graphic is used to provide an objective, executive summary of strengths and weaknesses in the organization’s records management processes and infrastructure. By clicking on a particular part of the graphical report, a link is made to the appropriate training resources available. Figure 4 illustrates a high-level entry in the database.

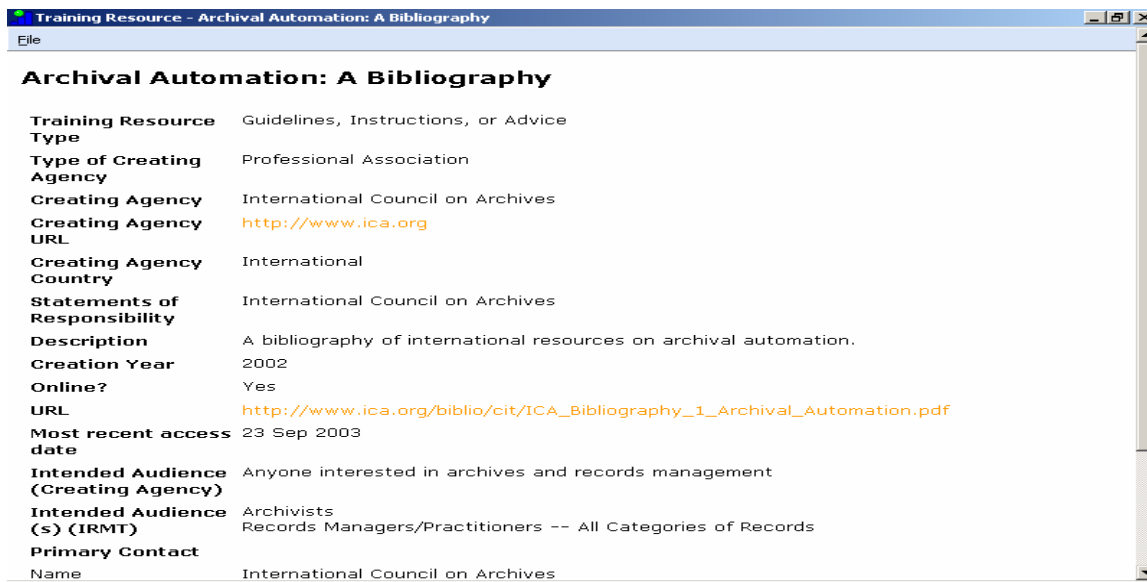


Figure 4

The assessment team will need to review the diagnosis generated by the tool to ensure that it reflects what they heard. They may need to consult the notes made during the interviews to explain the results and highlight any significant differences between the information gathered during the interviews and the resultant diagnosis.

When the interviews are completed and the analysis is finalized, the assessment team will need to present the findings to the organization. The presentation may need to be given to different audiences within the organization, and the presenter may wish to emphasize particular points to senior managers (for instance, strategy, budgeting or mandates) and to operational staff.

RMCAS can generate a variety of reports to support an assessment and provide an analysis of results. The reports are summarized in Table 7.

RMCAS Reports

Assessment Summary Report: a three dimensional graphical representation of the capacity levels obtained by the Records Management life cycle elements and Organizational Environment Elements.

Question Results Report: displays for each question asked in the questionnaire: the question, the answer choices, the primary source of information, the parent question, any prerequisite questions, the related capacity statements and the answer set used to determine support or refutation of the capacity statement and the answer(s) given by the interviewee. The results can be displayed by interviewee and by question section or the question itself. If required, the results can also display any questions flagged for follow-up and any conflicting stakeholder answers to questions.

Blank Questionnaire: This report allows the interviewer to print out an unfilled questionnaire for review by either interviewer or interviewee prior to interview. Responses to the questions maybe recorded on the blank questionnaire in the instance where the interviewer may not have access to a computer. In this case, the interviewer should return to RMCAS and enter responses into the application after the interview is complete.

Capacity Statement: This shows a list of capacity statement information associated with the assessment including: capacity statements; organization environment elements; RM lifecycle elements; related capacity level; capacity statement source citation.

Capacity Statement Results: The report shows a list of the capacity statements that apply to the assessment and whether they were achieved, unachieved or undetermined by the interview results.

Environment Element Summary: This displays a two-dimensional graph plotting the capacity levels for the chosen environment by lifecycle. It also links to the training resources concerning different capacity statements; lists the top and bottom capacity score obtained in the assessment within the chosen lifecycle; lists the interviews completed in the assessment.

Table 8

Current Status of RMCAS

An automated demo of RMCAS is currently in development. Over the past six months, peer review of the system's core components (assessment questions, capacity statements and capacity levels) has been carried out by collaborators in Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom. Experts in the fields of records management, financial management, human resource management and legal and judicial management have contributed to the review. The Trust has

presented RMCAS at three records management and archives professional events for informal feedback. 'Self-tests' of the RMCAS are being carried out by the National Archives of eight countries: Malaysia, Singapore, Botswana, South Africa, Ghana, Yap (Federated States of Micronesia), Belize and Jamaica.

A pilot field test in the Kenya courts was carried out in June-July 2004. It is anticipated that the Trust's staff and advisers will also conduct a limited number of formal pilots of RMCAS.

Further software development is expected to take place during August and September 2004. The objective is to make the RMCAS software available for public use in Autumn 2004. The online training resources database will also be publicly available as a separate resource.

**Financial Records and Information Systems
in the Department of the Accountant General, Botswana**

Initial Test Assessment

Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age

Financial Records and Information Systems
in the Department of the Accountant General
Botswana

Initial Test Assessment



International Records Management Trust

August 2003

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INTRODUCTION

Terms of Reference

- 1 The International Records Management Trust is developing a Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS) to measure the quality of records and information systems in relation to clearly defined functional requirements and benchmarks. The Government of Botswana kindly agreed to be involved in the development of this methodology, and this report covers field testing of assessment questions in relation to financial records at the Accountant General's Department in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Testing was carried out on April 2003 by participants of a workshop held at the University of Botswana, and there was a follow-up visit in August 2003 to discuss and expand the findings and clarify some of the responses to the questions asked.
- 2 This report is based on observations made and interviews conducted during the two visits. The testing process was intended to provide a high level study of financial records systems in Botswana and make an input to the development of RMCAS. The findings presented here are not intended to be comprehensive assessment, but the Government of Botswana will be able to use the completed assessment tool to carry out a full assessment. This work formed part of the Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age Project that is being delivered by the Trust with support from the World Bank.

Acknowledgements

- 3 Grateful thanks are extended to Mr P E Namogang, Accountant General, for generously agreeing to allow his staff to work with the project team. The support and interest of Mr S Sengupta and Mrs M L Hule, Assistant Accountant Generals, are also especially appreciated, and thanks are also due to the many other officials of the Department who kindly made themselves available and provided much valuable information during the visits.
- 4 Collaboration with the University of Botswana Department Of Library and Information Studies and the Botswana National Archives and Records Service (BNARS) was of immense value. The inputs and support from the staff of both institutions made an important contribution to the success of the testing process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 5 This report covers field testing of a methodology for assessing the management of financial records in the Department of the Accountant General (AGD) in Botswana in April and August 2003. Assessment questions that had been developed by the International Records Management Trust were used in interviews with AGD staff, including staff responsible for records and staff of the AGD's IT Unit. A follow-up interview was conducted in August

with senior staff of the Accountant General's Department to present previous findings and to receive comments. Consolidated findings are presented in this report. (paras 34 to 38 and Appendix C)

- 6 There appeared to be a lack of clarity about records management policies, procedures, resources and responsibilities among staff. It would be valuable if a policy for records management (as distinct from the *Financial Instructions and Procedures*) could be drafted in collaboration with BNARS, and disseminated. (paras 39 to 41)
- 7 Record-keeping within the AGD is broadly supported by national legislation and statutory instruments. (paras 42 to 46)
- 8 A separate Records Management Manual would be a valuable means of providing guidance on policies and procedures for managing records, including electronic records, throughout their life cycle and would update the existing Registry Handbook. (paras 47 to 51)
- 9 AGD has established a Records Committee. This marks an important step forward in raising records management concerns with senior managers. The Committee could play a key role in establishing a records management policy for the Department and ensuring that procedures and responsibilities are documented in a new Records Management Manual. (paras 52 to 53)
- 10 It would be valuable for the Committee to include AGD IT staff and BNARS staff to help oversee both paper and electronic records issues. Training in electronic records management is needed for staff. (paras 51, 54 to 55)
- 11 The appointment of a records manager by BNARS to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning is a valuable step forward. The records manager's duties cover all Ministry of Finance and Development Planning departments including the Accountant General's Department. (paras 56 to 58)
- 12 Current shortages in equipment, resources and working and storage space have an impact on records and information management. At the time of the visits, the Department was renting off-site storage for semi-current records, including those from revenue offices throughout the country. Mobile shelving, microfilming and digitisation were being considered as possible solutions. (paras 59 to 62)
- 13 Different categories of staff in AGD have different levels of access to the records. (para 63)
- 14 Transfers of inactive records to storage are not carried out consistently. A seven year retention period is the working norm. Comprehensive retention and disposition schedules have not yet been developed. (paras 64 to 65)
- 15 The scheme of service for records staff provides a clearly defined career path, but many records positions in the AGD are filled by temporary staff who are not covered

by the Scheme. (paras 66 to 70)

- 16 There is recognition by senior management within AGD that records management can be improved by sensitising staff about the importance and benefits of good record-keeping and by communicating policies and procedures to staff. AGD has proposed a workshop involving BNARS and the University of Botswana and this would be a valuable initiative. (paras 71 to 72)
- 17 A number of short and long term recommendations for strengthening records management are offered in the report and they are summarised in paras 73 and 74.

BACKGROUND

Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age Project

- 18 Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age is a three-year project initiated by the World Bank in partnership with the Trust. It involves coordinating a global network of institutions and organisations to facilitate the modernisation of information and records systems.
- 19 Records, and the information they contain, are a valuable asset that need to be managed and protected. Records provide the essential evidence that a particular action or transaction took place or that a particular decision was made. They support all business functions and are critical to the assessment of policies and programmes, and to the analysis of individual and organisational performance. Without adequate records, government cannot administer justice; cannot manage the state's resources, its revenue, and its civil service; and cannot deliver services such as education and health care.
- 20 Without accurate and reliable records, and effective systems to manage them, governments cannot be held accountable for their decisions and actions, and the rights and obligations of citizens and corporate bodies cannot be upheld. New technologies provide great potential to improve services and efficiency, but the evidence base upon which governments depend must continue to be protected and preserved. For initiatives such as e-government and e-commerce to be successful, governments must have access to information that possesses certain crucial characteristics: the information must be available, accurate, relevant, complete, authoritative, authentic and secure.
- 21 The aim of the Evidence-Based Governance Project is to make records management a cornerstone of the global development agenda. The challenge is to rebuild and modernise information and records management systems in parallel with complementary measures to improve the broader environment for public sector management. The project represents a major opportunity to integrate records management into global strategies for good governance, economic development and poverty reduction. Specifically, the project will develop a Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS) to be available in

the public domain without charge to assist governments in assessing the infrastructure and capacity for managing paper and electronic records.

The Management of Financial Records

- 22 Many countries around the world are in the process of strengthening their democratic institutions. More generally, public disquiet and awareness of widespread corruption on virtually every continent has focused attention on the need for institutional capacity building, especially the need for greater financial accountability.
- 23 Public sector accountability, particularly financial accountability, is a high priority on the bilateral and multilateral donors' aid agenda. Donor agencies are beginning to recognise that strengthening records management systems is part of wider institutional capacity building and policy reforms.
- 24 Well-maintained records permit accountants to prepare financial reports on the management of state resources. These reports enable parliament and the public to see how financial resources have been accounted for and managed. Well-maintained records also permit independent auditors to give the public assurance that the financial reports are credible and thus underpin good financial management, information and accountability.

Functions of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and Accountant General's Department

Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

- 25 The Ministry's overall objective is 'to develop a sound national planning machinery and ensure through the effective economical and efficient utilisation of all public finances and stores, that the national socio-economic development requirements are met' and 'to control and manage public moneys and to sign and transmit to the Auditor General the accounts and statements specified in the Finance and Audit Act'.¹
- 26 Functions which fall directly under the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning include:
 - coordinating and preparing development and recurrent budgets revenue estimates and controlling the use of public funds
 - coordinating and preparing National Development Plans
 - coordinating rural development, to include assessing drought and relief measures

¹ http://www.gov.bw/government/ministry_of_finance_and_development_planning.html

- financial administration of public institutions acts
- formulating taxation policy and awarding public works through the Central Tender Board, and administering funds disbursements and receipts thereof
- providing internal audits of Government financial operations systems
- monitoring the implementation of development projects.

27 The Ministry is made up of the following departments:

- Central Statistics Office
- Department of Customs and Excise
- Department of Supply
- Department of Taxes and the Government Computer Bureau
- Department of the Accountant General.

Department of the Accountant General

28 The Accountant General, as the public servant responsible for recording the receipt and expenditure of government money, is head of the accounting service of government. He appoints accounts staff to the accounting units within the 14 ministries. Accounting units are headed by Finance Officers. The Accountant General also appoints Revenue Officers in 28 districts, who are responsible for supervising the collection of revenue and making certain payments within the district.

29 The Government of Botswana has a centralised system of accounting (though this may change in future). While ministries maintain certain accounting records, such as vote ledgers, the main accounts are maintained by a central computer. Input documents originate from the ministries but there are also centralised functions within the AGD that initiate transactions.

30 A new Government Accounting and Budgeting System (GABS) is expected to go live in mid-2004. Cash management responsibilities are clearly defined in Financial Instructions and Administrative Instructions policies and the Finance and Audit Act. There is a 14 day limit rule for cash management. Cash management is not yet computerised. Accountants expressed a hope that tenders for new systems will include cash management functionality.

31 The Accountant General's Department consists of the following divisions:

- Accounting

- Administration
- Agencies
- Banking
- Control
- Departmental Management
- Inspections
- Passages
- Pensions
- Registry
- Salaries
- Supplies
- Systems.

32 Within the Department, there are four Assistant Accountant Generals, one of which has responsibility for records. BNARS staff are posted to the Department's Registry/Records Management Unit. However, the Department also appoints additional records staff. This issue is discussed in more detail in paras 66 to 70.

33 There are two registries within the Records Management Unit. One deals with policy, administration and personnel files for the Department. The other manages 'salaries files' for the whole of the public service².

METHODOLOGY

34 During the April 2003, interviews, lasting between 30 minutes and two hours, were conducted with AGD staff including the Assistant Accountant General responsible for records, staff of the Records Management Unit, accountants and staff of the AGD's IT Unit.

35 Questions were selected from the Trust's Financial Records and Information Systems Assessment Tool. On average, over 40 questions were asked of each unit team. Two

² A salary file is created by the first letter of appointment and provides a record of all subsequent changes. Similar or related information is kept by the Department for Personnel Services and Management and the employing body of the public servant.

interviewers were assigned to each of the four interviews, and responses were cross-checked between the interviewers and combined to produce one set of responses to compare across units. Interviewers and interviewees are listed at Appendix B.

- 36 The interviewers compared and selected questions best suited to the work of the staff in each of the units interviewed. Not all units were asked the same questions. This did not provide a comprehensive assessment, which would involve a more complete set of questions which would be asked of a range of different stakeholders to provide a more accurate picture. After the interviewers transcribed the interviews, they collated them on a spreadsheet that allowed for comparison of responses across units. The interview responses are tabulated at Appendix C.
- 37 A follow-up interview of about 90 minutes was conducted in August with senior staff of the Accountant General's Department to present previous findings and recommendations and to receive comments. A number of factual corrections were made to the report of the April visit and changes were also made to recommendations. Responses to follow-up questions are incorporated in the table at Appendix C.
- 38 The conclusions and recommendations presented in this report are based on the findings of the April and August visits.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

Records Management Policies and Responsibilities

- 39 The interviews indicated that there is a lack of clarity among staff in the AGD about records management policies, procedures and responsibilities. It would be helpful if a Records Management Manual could be produced to support the *Financial Instructions and Procedures*, which define what records should be kept and for how long in relation to financial procedures but do not describe how the records should be kept. See paras 47 to 48 for more information about the *Financial Instructions and Procedures*.
- 40 Records management policies, procedures and responsibilities need to be drafted in collaboration with BNARS. There is a need to address the management of electronic records as well as paper records so that there is an integrated approach to creating, maintaining, accessing, preserving and disposing all records regardless of format.
- 41 Ideally the records management policy should cover subjects including:
 - legislative and regulatory requirements relating to financial records management, and any broader government objectives, such as access to information policy
 - definition of records and their key characteristics (such as evidentiary quality,

authenticity, reliability)

- purpose of records (eg, accountability, audit)
- requirements for good record-keeping and system design (paper and electronic)
- standards for financial records management
- skills and competencies for managing records
- user responsibilities.

42 Regulatory requirements broadly support record keeping in the Accountant General's Department. Paragraph 102 (6) of the *Financial Instructions and Procedures*, issued in 1993 under Section 44 of the Finance and Audit Act requires the Accountant General to submit to the Auditor General as expeditiously as possible the accounts specified in the Finance and Audit Act and to prepare such other financial statements as may be required by law. The Accountant General sees this regulation as the prime directive for good records management within the Department.

43 Paragraph 1703 of the *Financial Instructions* sets out the minimum period for the preservation of original vouchers, receipts, paid cheques and subsidiary records as seven years, and ledgers, cash books and journals as ten years. Paragraph 609 requires that used receipt books may be destroyed three years after closure.

44 Other sections have requirements for record keeping. These include, for example:

- safe-keeping of accountable documents (para 106 (4), (13))
- producing records when required by the Accountant General or Auditor General (para 106 (16))
- attachment of supporting documents to payment vouchers (para 404)
- maintenance of revenue records (para 504 (4), 507, 512)
- custody and storage of receipt books (607, 611)
- register of articles in safes (915)
- custody of cheque books (1106)
- access by the Auditor General, or any person authorised by him, to accounting and financial records (1602)
- register of moneys received through the post (1705)

- 45 It was reported that the *Financial Instructions* are not applicable to parastatal organisations. Parastatal organisations appoint their own auditors, but audit reports are examined by the Public Accounts and submitted to Parliament. Local authorities use a different accounting system from that used by central government.
- 46 The Accountant General issues a *Manual of Financial Procedures*, which forms part of the *Financial Instructions and Procedures*. It is required to be read in conjunction with Chapter VIII of the Constitution (relating to the control of public funds), the *Finance and Audit Act, Financial Instructions, Supplies Regulations* and *Procedures and General Orders*. The *Financial Procedures* are regarded as mandatory unless otherwise stated.

Records Policies and Procedures

- 47 In describing financial and accounting processes, the *Manual of Financial Procedures* provides specimens of the forms and explains how they should be used for the recording of transactions. This ensures that records creation and classification is largely uniform within the Accountant General's Department, (though there are some variations according to work flow and resource allocation). For example, procedures for processing receipts including post and cash banking are well defined.
- 48 However, the *Manual* says little about how the completed forms as the accounting records, such as payment vouchers and their supporting documents, should be managed and preserved. A separate *Records Management Manual* would be valuable in providing guidance and procedures for managing records during their life cycle. The *Records Management Manual* could also provide valuable guidance on matters relating to, for example, the registration, storage and arrangement of records, access to them and their ultimate disposal.
- 49 The existing *Registry Handbook* provides the basis for a comprehensive *Records Management Manual*³ but needs to be updated to reflect records management policies and to cover the management of electronic records. Once created, it will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains current and relevant. It is recommended that it is issued in loose leaf form so that individual sections can be replaced as needed.
- 50 The *Records Management Manual* should be consistent with, and supportive of, work flow and business functions within the AGD and should reflect current practice, for example, the batching, numbering, receipt and recording of vouchers, and the colour coding of documents, such as credits (pink) and debits (blue).
- 51 Records procedures also need to support data entry from paper records in computerised systems. A member of the AGD staff observed that AGD computer data is not easily

³ Interviewees referred to the document variously as both the *Handbook* and the *Manual*. The document in question was not seen by the team during the visits.

accessible, as the accounting system was not designed for the management of, and access to, records over time⁴.

Oversight and Staffing of the Records Management Function

- 52 AGD has taken an important step forward in creating a Records Committee. The Committee was established, with the advice of BNARS, following a recommendation to the Accountant General by the Assistant Accountant General (Pensions, Payroll and Passages), who became chair of the Committee. Initially, the Committee met monthly and was attended by senior managers representing each section of the Department. Recently it has met less regularly and had been attended by some senior managers but also middle managers as representatives of sections. The Committee presents records concerns and proposals to senior management and is responsible for providing records management solutions. In the past, it has recommended microfilming and off-site storage of paper records.
- 53 The Committee could play a key role in establishing a records management policy for the Department and ensuring that procedures and responsibilities are documented in a Manual for Records Management.
- 54 Electronic records policies and issues are addressed by a committee of representatives from AGD, BNARS and the IT Department's Government Computer Bureau (GCB). Records Management Unit staff should receive training in electronic records management from BNARS, but at the time of the visits, this was not happening, nor was there an electronic records management programme in AGD. There was, however, a good inter-divisional understanding of current file and document classification which will provide a good basis for the discipline required to manage electronic records throughout their life cycle.
- 55 At the time of the visits, accounting records were still largely paper-based, with computer-generated records being printed to paper. However, as more functions are computerised and more records are created and stored electronically, it would be helpful to have a single Records Committee overseeing both paper and electronic records issues, ideally with BNARS and IT staff represented.
- 56 Staff of the Government Computer Bureau and BNARS are assigned to departmental IT and Records Management Units. A Records Manager has been appointed from BNARS to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. The postholders' duties cover all departments of the Ministry, including the Accountant General's Department. At time of the visits, the postholder was undertaking professional studies overseas. Before his departure on study leave, the records manager was making a significant impact in raising awareness and standards and was taking a lead in finding solutions to storage problems.

⁴ System training is provided to users by their heads of department and assigned IT officers and the system is backed-up regularly by systems administrators and IT staff.

- 57 The Government of Botswana is to be commended for appointing records managers to ministries and for supporting them to acquire professional qualifications so that they can play a full role in improving the management of government records. It also will be important to encourage career development at more junior levels (see paras 66 to 70).
- 58 It was reported that staff are held individually responsible for the loss of or damage to records in their care. Staff members are assigned responsibility for records created in their own area of workflow. However, the scope of their responsibility is not always understood and could be more clearly defined.

Storage and Preservation

- 59 Equipment and resources for managing records need to be strengthened. Shortages include a critical lack of storage furniture and equipment, and working and storage space that impacts directly on records and information management.
- 60 At the time of the visit, the AGD was renting storage as a means of dealing with its space constraints. This accommodation is used to store semi-current paper records that rarely need to be accessed. These materials include records transferred to the store from revenue offices throughout the country. The Department intends to install mobile shelving but still envisages retaining the rented accommodation. The requirement to keep large volumes of paper records is a problem. Digital imaging is an objective, but safeguards for managing electronic records will need to be in place.
- 61 Microfilming and digitisation have been identified as a means of providing back-up copies for vital records. The Records/Document Management Section of the AGD was responsible for microfilming documents and for storing and making accessible semi-current records. It was reported that initially microfilm training was provided by a contractor but that the skills acquired by the AGD had been lost due to staff attrition.
- 62 The criteria for microfilming records were not clear to the interviewers. A microfilm programme was in effect from 1992 to 1999. Retrieval of those records is very good. Scanning as an alternative to microfilming was proposed in 2001 but at the time of the visits a vendor had not been identified.

Access

- 63 Different categories of stakeholders have different levels of access to records. The records are not open to the public (other than retired AGD employees) but members of the public have the right to request copies of the AGD's annual audited financial report. Active records are open to accounting staff in each relevant unit and revenue holders, to warrant holder and to authorised public officers. Auditors and external investigators are given access to AGD records. Registries are locked offices. Once records have been transferred to storage, only public officers and those staff who have demonstrated the need to action

material are given access. No alteration to or disposal of records is allowed by users, but it was reported that there is currently no way to enforce this policy. According to non-records staff, records in the Centre are not generally circulated, but copies are made available. However, it was also reported that 'charge-out' cards for records held in the Centre exist and loans are tracked on file covers. Access policies and procedures need to be clarified and communicated to staff, and enforced.

Records Disposition

- 64 There is a system for transferring inactive records to storage but it was not applied consistently. Transfers take place when storage areas become congested, rather than taking place systematically through the use of disposition schedules. Records staff visit offices to enable transfers to both the on-site records room and to secure off-site storage locations. There are two warehouses used for this purpose. Archival records are transferred to BNARS.
- 65 Records staff reported that there is no established system for appraisal and authorised disposition. A seven year retention period is technically the norm, but retention and disposition schedules have not yet been developed, although they are provided for in the Finance and Audit Act. There is little pressure to develop retention schedules, beyond the self-selection provided by the severe lack of storage space for records. Unused accounting documents and blank forms such as receipts must go to the Board of Destruction to be destroyed. The Permanent Secretary of Finance must authorise the final disposition of AGD records. It was reported that recent legislation gives BNARS final approval of archival disposition.

Professional Career Development

- 66 Although there is a clearly defined pathway for careers in records management via BNARS, there is a general shortage of records staff throughout the government that affects the financial area. BNARS is responsible for training records management staff and works with the assistance of Ministry accounting staff.
- 67 For example, the Salaries Registry is seriously understaffed. At the time of the study, three of the staff members were appointed from BNARS within the scheme of service, but five temporary staff were outside the scheme. Temporary staff have no career path and this affects the quality of available personnel and their performance. However, current resources levels at BNARS prevent it from being able to supply adequate number of the required registry staff.
- 68 In general, there is a need to raise the profile of recordkeeping and its importance in underpinning government functions. The financial management function is a good example of the risks inherent in poor records management - without well-maintained financial records there can be no accountability: accountants cannot reconcile accounts or

prepare reliable financial reports, and auditors are unable to reassure the public that the government has management of the state's financial resources.

- 69 The case needs to be made either to shift more resources to BNARS so that it is in a better position to respond to the need for more and better trained staff in government departments or to shift resources within departments so that records management can be given the priority that it needs.
- 70 It was suggested that if the number of BNARS permanent staff cannot be increase, the Ministry could consider increasing the number of positions for its record-keeping staff and post these staff to BNARS for training. Other ministries follow this practice. However, this action may not be practicable as once staff are trained, they require an increase in salary. A solution might be to increase the total number of records posts within the records scheme of service. The initiative for this type of change would need to come from BNARS.

Communicating Records Management Policies and Practices

- 71 Senior management within the Accountant General's Department recognise the need to sensitise staff about the importance and benefits of good record-keeping and by communicating policies and procedures to staff. Real value would come from including all staff with a role in creating, using or managing financial and accounting records be targeted. This would include, for example, cashiers working in the districts. The Accountant General's Department has proposed a workshop to BNARS and University of Botswana and this would be a valuable initiative.
- 72 All staff need to be made aware of their responsibilities for records. Accountability would be greatly strengthened if specific recordkeeping responsibilities were included in job descriptions and linked to performance reviews. Work flows should ensure that records are tracked throughout their lifecycle from creation/receipt to disposal. However, the introduction of a culture of accountability and greater discipline may need to be a longer term objective.

Recommendations

- 73 Recommendations to AGD:
- The Records Committee continues to meet regularly (once a month or more frequently if needed) and should comprise senior representatives of all sections as well as senior records staff
 - The Records Committee becomes involved in the oversight of electronic records management and includes representatives of BNARS and the Government's Computer Bureau.

- A records management policy for the Accountant General's Department is prepared, with support from BNARS.
- The Registry Manual is revised by the Ministry or the Accountant General's Department and re-issued as a Records Management Manual. The Manual should support accounting policies and procedures.
- The Ministry and the Department work with BNARS to ensure that records management functionality is designed into the new automated accounting system GABS. The new systems should have good document and information management and high reporting functionality to enable better electronic records management.
- A programme of work is instituted in collaboration with BNARS to transfer closed files to more appropriate storage to relieve acute space pressure in offices.
- Communication regarding records management policies and procedures within the AGD are improved by:
 - ◊ working with BNARS to provide awareness raising training for records users and records management workshops for records staff, focusing on policies and procedures and any new and improved directives on records management
 - ◊ circulating timely inter-departmental directives regarding new policies and procedures
 - ◊ revising the Financial Instructions to complement the newly established records management policy and creating a Records Management Manual.
- The Records Management Unit, working with AGD senior management and BNARS, agrees retention and disposal instructions for all categories of AGD records.

74 Recommendations relating to BNARS are that:

- The number of posts within the scheme of service for records staff is increased to provide greater support for the records management function.
- Retention and disposition schedules and instructions are agreed and authorised by BNARS in accordance with current legislation and Financial Instructions.
- BNARS positions itself to assist government departments to manage electronic records effectively with the expected passing of the Botswana Cyber Law in 2004.

MEMBERS OF THE STUDY TEAM

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Mr Don McGee, Information Systems Analyst

International Records Management Trust

Mr Andrew Griffin, Deputy Director (now with IMF)
Mr Peter Van Garderen, Consultant
Ms Sarah Demb, Project Manager

LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

Interviewer	Affiliation	Interviewee	Affiliation
Andrew Griffin and Justice Wamukoya and Peter Sebina	IRMT Moi University/ University of Botswana University of Botswana	Mr Sibnath Sengupta Mr PE Namogang	Assistant Accountant General Accountant General ⁵
George Wasonga and Peter Van Garderen	BNARS IRMT	Mr A B Bani	IT Unit
Leonard Mbakile and Sarah Demb	BNARS IRMT	Mrs Molathegi Mr B P Pule	Principal Accountant, Revenue Division Principal Administrative Officer
Nathan Mnjama and Don McGee and Saul Zulu	University of Botswana The Library and Archives of Canada BNARS		Records Management Unit Records Management Unit

⁵ Introduction of project only.

**Summary Test Results for
Financial Records and Information Systems in
Botswana**

April 2003, updated August 2003

Question	Topic	Records Management Unit Response	IT Unit Response	Accountants Department Response	Assistant Accountant General Department Response
1.1.6	National legislation for records keeping?	Yes. <i>Financial Instructions</i> (Regulations)	n/a	n/a	Prov 1703 of <i>Financial Instructions and Procedures</i> , enacted under Section 43 of the <i>Finance and Audit Act</i> . Within eight months of close of Financial Year, Accountant General must complete accounts as specified in Schedule 2 of the <i>Finance and Audit Act</i> and submit the accounts to the Auditor General.
1.1.7	Legislation for privacy?	<i>National Archives Act</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.1.9	All stakeholders considered when determining retention periods?	Yes and no, as not all. Stakeholders have access to the Records (ie if you consider the Public as stakeholders)	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.1.10	Records disposal address research needs?	Yes. Records are disposed of through destruction, transfer or accession to Archives.	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.2.1	Does the organisation have a mission statement?	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes. Part of it says that AG's Dept will be leader in accounting services in Africa.

1.2.3	Are financial rules and procedures national or local?	n/a	n/a	n/a	<i>Financial Instructions and Procedures</i> are applicable to Govt of Botswana but not to parastatals. For parastatals, Board of Directors appoints auditors; audit reports are examined by Public Accounts Committee and submitted to Parliament. Also, local authorities have different accounting system; more information could be provided by the Principal Finance Officer, Local Govt. (who is responsible to the Accountant General)
1.2.4	Uniform records procedures?	Some are uniform but certain variations exist due to the nature of the work (mail) and in the case of the Salary Section, due to work load and lack of resources.	n/a	n/a	n/a
1.2.5	Standard document formats for processes?	Some are uniform but certain variations exist due to the nature of the work, the mail being different and in the case of the Salary Section, due to work load and lack of resources.	n/a		n/a

2.1	Top-level champion?	Yes. The Director and to some extent Ministry management in general. On the Salary Section side, 'senior management seems to support us'.	n/a	n/a	n/a
2.2	Central body or officer responsible for financial RM?	Yes - Records Manager	n/a	n/a	Four Assistant Accountant Generals within AG's Dept. Mr Sengupta is one: he has overall responsibility for records. There is a Records/Document Management section which has responsibility for microfilming.
2.3	Same as above for whole life-cycle?	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
2.6	Regular communication between senior staff and mgmt?	Yes , through meetings and open communication	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.1.1	Policy or guidelines for financial RM? Issued by whom?	Yes - <i>Registry Manual</i> - Does not cover e-records and was produced by the Director of Personnel Management	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.1.2	Specified items in policy	Set standards and assigns responsibilities	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.1.3	Who audits compliance with standards?	Yes and they use questionnaires	n/a	n/a	n/a

3.1.4	Method of measuring performance against organisational objectives?	Yes but only through performance appraisals	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.1.5	Procedures manual?	Yes - <i>Financial Instructions</i> .	n/a	No, not to knowledge of interviewees.	<i>Financial Instructions and Procedures</i> . Some of these relate to records, for example, ch 18 deals with the control of documents. The Accountant General has the authority to issue procedures.
3.1.6	E-records covered in manual?	No - e-records issues are new	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.1.7	Manual topics include:	There are no procedures yet for e-records	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.1.8	Centralised body?	n/a	Yes - advisory	Ministry staff are assigned to dept. as are officers from Computer Bureau.	A committee of representatives from the Accountant General's Dept, BNARS and IT Dept of Gov't Computer Bureau evaluates tenders for computerisation.
3.1.9	Is the development and procurement of an IT systems based on business process analysis, identification of records requirements, cost-benefit analysis, business case, invitation to tender, a selection process, procurement guidelines and implementation and project timeline proposal?	n/a	Yes	n/a	n/a

3.1.10	Who oversees new systems?	The Records Manager	IT Committee	n/a	n/a
3.1.11	Is RM represented on/by above if committee or group?	There was a Records Committee but it no longer exists. They are presently considering resurrecting it. There is still a records committee in the Salary section. [This information subsequently corrected]]	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.1.12	Metadata standard used by system?	No	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.1.13	Is there a government interoperability standard?	n/a	Yes	n/a	n/a
3.2.1.1.	Consistent scheme?	Yes	n/a	Monthly voucher batch numbers indicate month and year of collection and station, department or AG batch numbers. Vouchers are numbered sequentially within batches. Batch numbers and voucher number ranges are recorded in ledgers. Consistent but no functional classification scheme.	Types of documents are numbered in sequence. Note that credit documents are pink and debit documents are blue.
3.2.2.1	Record kept of materials removed from storage?	Yes - Uses a charge card and file cover	n/a	Records are not usually removed; users can have reference copies made by records staff.	n/a
3.2.2.2	Location of file known when in use?	Yes - file movement cards are used and transient	n/a	No; but locate can be divined by stage in process.	n/a

3.2.2.3	System for transferring closed or inactive files to storage?	Yes but not consistently applied	n/a	Staff come to offices to transfer records to records room. Periodic transfers to off-site storage are made on a storage space need basis.	n/a
3.2.2.4	Are transfers documented for individual file retrieval?	Yes	n/a	Yes, chronological documentation.	n/a
3.2.2.5	Are transfers to semi-current or inactive storage given a disposal action?	Yes - to store at the Centre and they provide review dates	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.3.1	Can records be found when required?	Yes	n/a	The more recent, the easier records are to locate. Retrieval of microfilmed records (1992 to 1999) is very good. Computer data is not very easily retrieved since system is designed for accounting purposes and not record keeping. Staff hope GAP will address this concern.	There are examples of documents found to be missing, but considering the volume of documents, this small proportion is to be expected.
3.2.3.2	Are required records ever found to be lost or damaged?	Never damaged but sometimes lost	n/a	n/a	Can be slow if it is a paper record and kept in the warehouse. Records more than one year old are kept in two warehouses. Records for the current year are kept in the A-G's Office. However, records can be found in the warehouses.
3.2.3.3	Are concerns expressed by the public about inadequate response time to RFIs?	Public does not have access other than retired employees	n/a	n/a	n/a

3.2.3.4	Are there formal access instructions?	Informal	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.3.5	Who is allowed access to financial records?	Public Officers only (Financial) and only those who have to action something	n/a	All accounting staff in unit and all revenue officers, every warrant holder and authorised public officer.	Records section managers and chief accountant. Accounting staff must request to see documents.
3.2.3.6	Are any non-officials allowed unsupervised access to records?	No but in some cases investigators and auditors have access	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.3.7	Are any records maintained and accessed solely by individuals?	No , except in their computers and copies in folders	Accessible to staff in registry	n/a	n/a
3.2.4.1	Established system for appraisal and authorised disposition?	No	n/a	No system but seven year retention period. Finance Permanent Secretary can authorise disposition. Recent legislation dictates that BNARS should have final approval in regard to archival disposition.	Records are destroyed when 7 years old. There is an annual exercise to do this. Unused accounting documents/forms such as receipts have to go to the Board of Destruction to be destroyed.
3.2.4.2	Are there regular retention and disposition schedules for financial records?	Not yet developed - but is part of the Financial Act	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.4.3	When were schedules last applied?	Don't have them	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.4.4	When were schedules last updated?	Don't have them so they can't be updated	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.4.5	Is concerned expressed about the above lack of guidance?	No	n/a	n/a	n/a

3.2.4.6	Id there is a system for identifying records of no further value, are the records destroyed by the organisation?	We contact BNARS for authority	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.4.7	Are systems designed so records remain authentic, accessible, reliable and usable for their entire retention period?	Not sure	Yes	n/a	Documents up to July 1999 have been microfilmed. Scanning was approved in 2001 but had not been implemented
3.2.4.8	Is there a mechanism for transferring records to off-line storage? Who is responsible?	n/a	Yes, through backup by systems administrator or any other IT Officer	n/a	n/a
3.2.4.9	Are records stored off-line migrated through systems changes?	n/a	Yes	n/a	n/a
3.2.4.10	Is there any institutional safeguard for archival records?	No but records are transferred to BNARS	Yes, currently undergoing digitisation	n/a	n/a
3.2.5.1	Are staff held individually responsible for the loss of or damage to records in their care?	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.5.2	Are records protected against unauthorised access?	Yes - registries are locked	n/a	Records room is restricted to officers. No alterations or disposal allowed by other staff, but not enforceable.	Little evidence of corruption in Botswana. Examples are rare and usually detected, though recognised that what is not known about is not detected. There is good security at the warehouse where records are held.

3.2.5.3	Is there a formal duplicate or back-up practice?	Microfilming - Accountant General only	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.5.4	Is there a receipt back-up system?	Only at the Accountant General - here there is no back up.	Yes	n/a	n/a
3.2.5.5	Are inactive paper files stored in a controlled and secure area?	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.6.1	Commitment to follow national or international standards?	Committee is no longer functioning.	n/a	Guidance from BNARS. <i>Financial Instructions</i> are procedures (how to create or destroy a record), not standards.	n/a
3.2.6.2	Internal records keeping audit re: national or international standards?	No but sometimes there are surveys	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.6.3	External audit?	No	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.2.6.4	Do manuals follow standards?	Yes - some	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.3.1	Do records creators and users believe there are adequate storage facilities?	No they are not adequate	Closed records – not enough storage facilities; some electronic records have insufficient storage	Shortage of paper storage space. Shortages of computer terminals; office storage space for staff.	n/a
3.3.2	Are records damaged?	Only by dust	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.3.3	Storage areas equipped with fire precautions?	Fire extinguishers - not sure when last checked.	n/a	n/a	n/a
3.3.4	Discretionary funding for supplies and equipment?	Not sure but think so.	n/a	n/a	n/a

3.3.5	Purchase of record supplies and equipment centrally controlled?	Held centrally	n/a	Supplies and equipment needs are submitted to the supplies division by any staff person. Approval for large purchases goes through higher levels as part of a tender process (Central Tender Board). No shortage of funds but not enough space for equipment.	n/a
4.1	Does records management have sufficient seniority to implement rm policy?	Yes, but could be higher placed in mgmt.	n/a	RM staff do not make policy. Records Committee can present concerns and proposals to senior management. The Committee is responsible for providing solutions to RM issues (ie scanning to replace lapsed microfilming and off-site storage) and meets regularly.	Takes a close interest in records issues himself (records are part of his responsibility). For example, in the microfilming of records (checks that records are complete). Says that having a professional records manager would help, but the records manager would need to work closely with accountants who understand the records and the functions they support.
4.2	Do records mgrs have professional training?	Yes	n/a	8 week course	Records skills have been learnt on the job. He knew nothing about government financial record keeping before joining Accountant General's Dept. Says that the record keeping procedures are simple and easy to learn. The problems relate to volume.

4.3	Do guidelines exist to assign records mgmt responsibility for specific functions to all relevant staff?	Yes	n/a	Staff members are assigned responsibility for records from different sources (depts., stations, etc.) in course of work. Not sure about Committee Guidelines but it represents all divisions and is intended to standardize records management procedures. It serves as a forum for issues. Records staff are on Committee although current senior member is on study leave.	Accounting Officers in Ministries are accountable through the Public Accounts Committee to Parliament. When examined on Auditor General's reports, Accounting Officers must reply. Internal audit by Accountant General's Dept is intended to ensure that Financial Instructions are complied with. Complaints about records problems are directed to the Assistant Accountant General with responsibility for records.
4.4	Are senior staff and records users provided with awareness training?	Not really	n/a	n/a	n/a
4.5	Are rm procedures manuals used for training staff?	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
4.6	How do senior mgrs supervise records staff?	Through the channels – organisation	n/a	n/a	n/a
4.7	Is there a clear or defined path for rm staff in the org?	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
4.8	Are there staff shortages in the records function?	In the entire government - systemic	n/a	n/a	n/a
4.9	Is there a high turnover of records staff?	No, not our level.	n/a	n/a	n/a

4.10	Is there a separate records class within the org that carries out the rm function?	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
4.11	Is rm training provided within the organisation?	No	n/a	BNARS is responsible for identifying training needs and works with the assistance of ministry accounting staff.	n/a
4.12	Do any records staff have electronic records mgmt. knowledge?	No	n/a	No. Comment made that microfilming training was initially provided by the microfilm contractor, but knowledge has been lost due to staff attrition. Complete training and skills for microfilming are no longer available.	n/a
4.13	Is electronic rm incorporated into general rm training?	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
5 General	n/a	n/a	There are no dedicated/ specific systems for records management at the moment.	n/a	n/a
5.3.1	Who is responsible for providing support for system users?	Heads of Dept and IT officers in the Computer Section	n/a	n/a	n/a
5.3.2	Do you believe there is adequate support for system users?	Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a
5.3.5	How are system users trained?	Basic training	n/a	n/a	n/a

5.3.6	Is there a user manual for the system?	No	n/a	n/a	n/a
5.4.3	Is the system included in disaster recovery planning?	No	n/a	n/a	n/a
5.4.4	Are there business continuity procedures and processes?	No	n/a	n/a	n/a
5.4.12	Have records ever been lost due to system failures or power outages, etc?	No	n/a	n/a	n/a
7.2.5	Is transaction data entered as transactions are concluded?	n/a	n/a	Data entry sometimes simultaneous with transaction, and updated upon completion of banking payments. Delay in main accounts 14-20 days. Batched vouchers collected and sent into AG weekly.	n/a
8.1.1	Have cash mgmt responsibilities been clearly defined in law, regulative or administrative instrument?	n/a	n/a	<i>Financial Instructions, Administrative Instructions, Finance and Audit Act.</i> Cash management produces rules (ie 14 day limit).	n/a
8.2.1	Is the cash management process computerised?	n/a	n/a	No, but intend that tender for GAP will address this.	n/a
8.4.1	Have clear rules and procedures been established to give direction on the timing and frequency of banking of collections?	n/a	n/a	Yes. Schedule of revenue collection. Rules in <i>Financial Instructions</i> .	n/a

8.5.1	Are there established policies for the prompt payment of gov't creditors?	n/a	n/a	There are complaints but often problems occur at the creditor end (incorrect documentation) rather than gov't. <i>Financial Instructions</i> dictate that payments be made within 48 hrs after vouchers have been validated.	n/a
10.1.1	Are there regulations that specify the recording of fixed and current assets?	n/a	n/a	Yes, spread across ministries.	n/a
10.3.1	Are acquisitions of physical capital assets recorded in he accounts and asset registers at the time of acquisition?	n/a	n/a	Documentation occurs across ministries.	n/a
11.2.1	Are there defined procedures for processing receipts, incl. post and cash banking?	n/a	n/a	Yes. Post banking goes to registry where transactions are defined in a handbook. Payments are authorised. Receipt books are kept for revenue collections.	n/a
11.2.2	Are standard document formats used for receipts?	n/a	n/a	Yes. <i>Registry Handbook</i> and <i>Financial Instructions</i> .	n/a
11.3.1	Are there defined procedures for processing payments to ensure they are properly authorised/approved, checked and supported by valid documentation?	n/a	n/a	Yes. Authorised by accountant.	n/a
11.3.2	Are standard document formats used for payments?	n/a	n/a	Yes.	n/a

11.4.1	Are all accounting records controlled and safeguarded?	n/a	n/a	Yes, similar to vouchers.	n/a
12.1	Are external financial reports required by law?	n/a	n/a	Yes - Annual statement of accounts and audit. General report accompanies these.	n/a
12.2	Are external financial reports made available to the legislature, major donors and the general public?	n/a	n/a	Annual statement via publication.	n/a
12.7	Do external reports show whether resources were obtained and used in accordance with legal and contractual requirements?	n/a	n/a	Yes, in conjunction with voucher records.	n/a

**Assessment of Records Management
in the Kenya Judiciary**

World Bank Development Grant Facility

*Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age:
Assessment of Records Management
in the Kenya Judiciary*



International Records Management Trust

August 2004

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INTRODUCTION

- 1 The Kenya Government requested an assessment of the infrastructure and capacity for managing records within the Kenya Judiciary. The International Records Management Trust carried out this assessment, in co-operation with the World Bank Legal and Judicial Reform Practices Group, using the Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS), which has been developed with funds from the World Bank's Development Grant Facility and the Governance Knowledge Sharing Program.
- 2 This report covers a visit to Kenya by Dr Justus Wamukoya and Ms Sarah Demb from 28 June to 9 July 2004. The Trust worked with the Government of Kenya to provide information, and at the same time to evaluate whether any adjustments to RMCAS are required to ensure that it provides the information that courts require in evaluating their records management services. During the assessment visit, the RMCAS module for judicial records and information systems was used to provide an objective assessment of the infrastructure and capacity for managing court records. The Trust is in the process of upgrading RMCAS, and the assessment provided valuable information about how the tool might be enhanced.
- 3 This report is based on observations made, interviews conducted and documentation collected during the visit. This report provides an overview of the state of records and information systems in selected courts in the judiciary of Kenya (see Appendix A for a graphical representation). The assessment team visited the High Court and Chief Magistrate's Court: Criminal and Traffic Division; the High Court and Chief Magistrate's Court: Civil and Family Division; the Court of Appeal; Kibera and Makadara District Courts; and the Milimani Commercial Courts. Records management practices and conditions vary to some extent across registries, but they tend to significantly decrease in quality in the district courts.
- 4 The terms of reference for the visit were as follows:
 - Duration and Team

Two records management specialists are to visit the courts for two weeks (ten working days) accompanied by a Kenyan court official (eg senior registrar) to act as facilitator and a senior staff member from the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS).
 - Preparation

Liaise with the court official to agree the program of briefings, visits, interviews and presentation of findings.
 - Initial Briefing and Fact-Finding (three days)

Brief the court official and KNADS officer on RMCAS and brief other stakeholders as appropriate

Examine court processes at different levels, for instance within the High Court and District Courts, to observe and understand work and information flows and the records created in courts at different levels. Observe records controls and procedures; current, semi-current and non-current records management practices in registries, offices and storage areas; and the use of computers and any computerised systems.

- Capacity Testing

Conduct interviews with one or more representatives of the following stakeholders: senior judicial administrators, senior court officials (eg Senior Registrars), lawyers, prosecuting authority, records managers/head of records function in judicial entities, ICT system/computer administrators, court clerks, other court records creators/users, National Archives staff and, if available, NGOs representing civil society.

- Documentation Gathering

Identify documents and copies obtained of relevant laws, regulations, directives, guidelines, manuals, system documentation and other materials that relate to the creation, management and disposal of court records.

- Analysis of Data and Presentation of Findings

Use the RMCAS software application to collect and analyse data and generate reports.

Present findings and reports to representative stakeholders.

Present initial findings to be presented to representative stakeholders on-site.

Present a more detailed report within one month of the visit, following deeper analysis of the findings

- Follow-Up Work

Test results and software feedback will be analysed in mid-August and further software development based on peer review and test results is expected to take place during August and September. The findings will be used to determine where additional capacity building materials are needed, such as judicial records procedures manuals and system specifications. These materials will be developed in the near future by the Trust. The immediate goal is to make the RMCAS software available for public use in October 2004.

Acknowledgements

- 5 Grateful thanks are extended to Justice William Ouko, former High Court Registrar, for helping to make the initial arrangements for the visit and for arranging the handover of logistics to his successor. Warm thanks are also due to Mr Charles Njai, current High Court Registrar, who facilitated the visit. Mr Mureithi, Senior Deputy Registrar/Personal Assistant to the Chief Justice; Mr Benjamin Kinuthia, Archivist III/IT Specialist; and Mr Joseph Kuria, Archivist for the Criminal and Civil Divisions of the High Court provided valuable advice and guidance throughout the visit. Their support and enthusiasm are greatly appreciated. The judges, court officials, legal practitioners and records staff who kindly made themselves available for interviews also provided much useful information. We also thank Acting Chief Court Administrator Mrs Lydia Achode for her support at the preliminary presentation of our findings. A full list of people consulted is at Appendix B. The Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS) also collaborated on the assessment and the Trust is particularly grateful to the Director Mr Musila Musembi (who retired midway through the assessment) and Deputy Archivist Mr John M’eria.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 6 The Kenya judicial system recognises common law and Islamic law. The subordinate courts consist of Kadhis courts, commercial courts, magistrate’s courts and district courts. The superior courts consist of the High Court and the Kenya Court of Appeal. The Chief Magistrate’s Court and district magistrates’ courts have jurisdiction to hear criminal and civil proceedings, with the exception of commercial cases heard by the Milimani Commercial Courts, which was established in 1988. The High Court has jurisdiction to supervise any civil or criminal proceedings before a subordinate court or court-martial. (paras 25 to 29 and Appendix B)
- 7 Records and information requirements need to be seen in the context of the judicial system’s complex network of relationships with other agencies and stakeholders and the resulting complex set of record keeping requirements. (para 30)
- 8 *The Records Disposal Act* (Cap 14 1963, revised 1972) provides specifically for the disposal of records in the custody of the High Court or of the Registrar. The Act also specifies that all requests for destruction of records must be made by application to the Chief Justice, and three months notice of destruction must be published in the *Kenya Gazette* according to standard practice which requires the individual records to be listed. (paras 31 to 32).
- 9 *The Public Archives and Documentation Service Act* (Cap 19 1967, rev 1991) includes the records of the High Court and of any other court or tribunal in its definition of public records (para 33).
- 10 The Judicial Rules and Procedures Committee of the Judicial Service Commission has

responsibility for generating and disseminating standard forms and other guidance on judicial functions, such as the now out-of-print and highly sought after Magistrate's Handbook, that contains some directions on record keeping as part of court functions. (para 34)

- 11 The Judicial Service Commission parallels the Public Service Commission in most respects with the exception of a scheme of service for records officers. The Public Service Commission's scheme of service for records staff comprises over 200 re-designated executive officers in job groups H to M. In 2001, a draft scheme of service for archivists was prepared by Mr Kuria, Archivist for the Criminal and Civil Divisions of the High Court, but it is unclear whether this is still under review by the Judicial Service Commission and KNADS. (para 35)
- 12 Until recently, record keeping systems throughout the Judiciary were poorly managed and could not be relied upon to meet the needs of the courts, government and civil society. Concerns were raised by the most senior court officials about the magnitude of records and information problems, especially the frequent loss of files. From 1991 onwards, there were concerted efforts to support improvements in registry and record keeping procedures to facilitate the handling of case files in the superior courts. Persistent efforts will be required to extend and institutionalise these improvements and to develop more specialised records management skills. (paras 36 to 42).
- 13 However, a 1999 report from the Committee on the Administration of Justice indicated that file retrieval, in district registries in particular, was 'a nightmare'. Registries had no systems of monitoring file movements; lawyers, litigants and the general public had unrestricted access to records; and many executive officers and clerks had no records management training. In 2003, KNADS officers met with court personnel to make a number of recommendations in relation to *Cap 14*, a schedule of duties for court archivists, the creation of a Records Management Division in the courts and the establishment of a judicial records centre. To date, these recommendations have not been implemented. (paras 43 to 44)
- 14 The courts have seen significant improvement in their records management procedures since 1998. In general, records staff members have a firm sense of responsibility and are committed to properly handling and safeguarding court records. However, very few if any, of the procedures that resulted in these improvements have been documented in policies. In addition to the specific problems highlighted in the report, there are a number of common issues that affect court registries. Many of these problems arise from the fact that the Judicial Rules and Procedures Committee is not used as a vehicle for addressing reforms in records management and because the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS) is not being invited to assist regularly the judiciary with records management. (paras 45 to 52)
- 15 This report identifies a number of specific issues in the areas of policies and procedures, including revisions to the *Records Disposal Act*; records storage constraints and staffing levels and training; and ownership and awareness of records management within the

judiciary. (paras 53 to 64)

- 16 The team used the legal and judicial records and information module of the Trust's Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS) to collect standardised and consistent data on the current conditions of records management in the judiciary. A copy of the RMCAS software programme was given to the Senior Deputy Registrar, Mr Mureithi, so that the courts could retain the data gathered, have access to the assessment summary report on conditions and maintain links to relevant training resources. The Assessment Summary report is at Appendix A. See also Appendix F for an explanation of the diagnostic scores. (paras 65 to 68)
- 17 The current conditions of records management in the courts vary, but there are similar issues across most environments, as few formal policies on records management are in place. The Civil Division includes the Central Registry, a Civil Court of Appeals Registry, and a Family Registry. The Civil Division Registry is one of the few in the courts to use a basic automated file tracking system along with a manual dispatch register. However, the security of files and documents is still at risk from very crowded conditions due to the centralisation of registry activities. The Family Registry currently holds files from 2000 onwards and experiences severe storage constraints that negatively affect preservation and retrieval of files. There is a clear need for basic records management training in the Civil Appeals Registry where files are stored on open shelves spine-side up, increasing the chances that loose documents will become misfiled, lost or damaged. (paras 69 to 76)
- 18 The Traffic Court Registry is very overcrowded in terms of both record keeping space and files storage. Overcrowding on the open shelves is due partially to the large amount of unexecuted and pending cases that currently number over 250,000. The Registry generates about 100 new cases per day and finalised case material is usually sent to their Archives on a weekly basis. (paras 77 to 78)
- 19 The Criminal Registry is one of the few offices to store records in file cabinets. The registry is much less congested than the other registries that the assessment team visited. Tracking of file movements in individual fresh case desk diaries was introduced about three years ago. (para 79)
- 20 The Criminal and Civil Divisions Archives is located in the basement of the High Court and was established in 1985. It receives closed records generated by the High Court and Chief Magistrate's Court. Associated exhibits are also stored in the Archives for safe-keeping. The basement space has experienced serious flooding in the past. The archives finds 'gazetting' procedures (as outlined in para 32) too burdensome to carry out, and this results in severe storage constraints. (paras 80 to 84)
- 21 The majority of records in the Court of Appeal Registry consist of bound copies of the documents submitted to the Court. This is the court of record and therefore it must retain permanently all of the mandated four copies of case records. However, in practice this is felt to be excessive and exact duplicates are appraised for destruction. Due to the large number of pending cases, the Registry suffers from severe files storage space constraints; a

number of files are stacked on the floor. Staff desks are also very close together in the crowded space. (para 85)

- 22 The Kibera and the Makadara Courts illustrate more serious degrees of similar problems. The Kibera District Court is located in a very poor and dangerous area that engenders serious security issues. It also suffers from such a severe lack of storage that some records are stored in its open reception area and are used as bedding by court guard dogs. The Makadara District handles from 30,000 to 50,000 cases per year. Although file tracking is a priority, space constraints make access and retrieval difficult. Court staff members at Kibera and Makadara find that detailed file tracking contributes to an overwhelming amount of work, and 'gazetting' requirements also hamper regular disposal of records. Both courts suffer from a lack of trained records staff. (paras 86 to 87)
- 23 The Milimani Commercial Courts were separated from the Civil Courts in 1988. At that point, some previous 21 years of inactive files were transferred to an archives storage space in the Income Tax Building across the street. Streamlining of court activities and files to over ten sub-registries has also improved file retrieval. Lawyers can access files in the registry upon application and perusal is unsupervised due to crowded conditions. There is no formal access policy to protect records. In general, the commercial courts suffer from a lack of storage space and serious resource constraints. (paras 88 to 99)
- 24 The recommendations in this report are intended to help the judiciary become compliant with the International Standard on Records Management (ISO 15489) and ensure that its records management utilises recognised policies and procedures. Recommendations relate to the following areas (see paras 100 to 119):
 - the importance of records management to effective legal and judicial reform and the preparation for access to information in light of future Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation
 - the awareness and ownership of records management at all managerial levels
 - the integration of business functions and records management activities
 - the integration of ICT and records management
 - the revision and/or establishment of records management legislation, policies and procedures
 - the improvement of resources and training
 - the establishment of a records management programme for the judiciary.

THE LEGAL AND JUDICIAL SYSTEM IN KENYA

- 25 Kenya's constitution provides for an independent Judiciary. The judicial system in Kenya recognises statutory and common law, tribal law, and Muslim law through the Kadhis courts. The subordinate Kadhis courts cover traditional marriage, divorce and inheritance. Common law, following the English model, provides the residual law. Trials are public and defendants have the right to legal representation at their own cost. The courts system forms a hierarchy which is illustrated at Appendix C.
- 26 The Chief Magistrate's Court and district magistrates' courts have jurisdiction to hear criminal and civil proceedings, with the exception of commercial cases, heard by the Milimani Commercial Courts, established in 1988. There are over 60 district courts or outstations, the busiest of which hear between 30,000 and 50,000 cases per year. Many cases heard by magistrates are non-contentious and are disposed of within a day. However, the large number of cases create related problems with records storage that in turn result in case backlogs in which many cases are only mentioned, as opposed to actually heard, out of necessity. Copies of proceedings are typed anew each time they are requested, thereby slowing down court processes. The Chief Magistrate noted that there is no strategic plan to address systemic improvements in courts procedures, although one is currently being developed.
- 27 The superior courts consist of the High Court (previously the Supreme Court) and the Court of Appeal. The High Court has jurisdiction to supervise any civil or criminal proceedings before a subordinate court or court-martial. Where a question as to the interpretation of the Constitution may arise in a subordinate court and that court is of the opinion that the question involves a substantial question of law, the question may be referred to the High Court.
- 28 The High Court has original jurisdiction to hear and determine all civil and criminal proceedings and to interpret and enforce the fundamental rights and freedoms provided by the Constitution. It also has jurisdiction in appeals from subordinate courts, and it has supervising jurisdiction over all lower courts and adjudicating authorities.
- 29 The Kenya Court of Appeal is presided over by the Chief Justice and no less than two other judges. The court has jurisdiction over appeals from judgements, decrees and orders of the High Court, as well as over appeals from Courts Martial.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT IN THE COURTS

- 30 There is a complex network of relationships between the judicial system and a range of agencies and stakeholders and this results in a complex set of record keeping requirements. These stakeholders include the Office of the Attorney General, the Police, the Prison Service, Parliament, the legal profession, the insurance industry and civil society. The Judiciary's records and information management systems must meet requirements for information provided to, received from, and coordinated and shared with these other stakeholders.

- 31 *The Records Disposal Act* (Cap 14 1963, revised 1972) provides specifically for the disposal of records in the custody of the High Court or of the Registrar, but it does not specify rules for disposition of the records in the Court of Appeal (the court of record) or the Commercial Courts, which post-date the Act. In general, records relating to civil cases are scheduled to be retained until 12 years from the date of the final judgement or order. The same retention period exists for records relating to criminal cases in which acquittals or discharges have been ordered; fines imposed; orders for security made; sentences of imprisonment not exceeding one year passed, or in which an accused person has been committed for trial and complaints dismissed by a magistrate; and for books of account lodged in connection with bankruptcy proceedings.
- 32 A retention period of three years from the date of action applies to police reports of death and records of inquests, miscellaneous police reports, reports of railway accidents, judicial returns from subordinate courts, and books of account lodged in connection with bankruptcy proceedings in which a discharge has been granted to the bankrupt. The same retention period covers the records of correspondence relating to trial dates, summonses, notices and warrants. A three year retention period also applies to proceedings, witness attendance logs, annual lists, juror and assessor summonses and forms requisitions. The Act also specifies that all requests for destruction of records must be made in application to the Chief Justice and three months notice of destruction must be published in the *Gazette* according to a mandated form indicating the individual case record.
- 33 *The Public Archives and Documentation Service Act* (Cap 19 1967, revised 1991) includes the records of the High Court and any other court or tribunal in its definition of public records. The Act established the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS). It outlines the powers of its Director, defines its general responsibilities, allows for general access to public archives and provides for penalties for the destruction of public archives. The Act also restricts the export of historical records, confirms the legal validity and the legal admissibility of certified copies of public archives as evidence. Finally, it establishes the official seal of service, protects copyright, creates the Public Archives Advisory Council and provides for the formulation of related regulations.
- 34 The Judicial Rules and Procedures Committee (comprised of two judges of the Court of Appeal, two High Court judges, a representative of the Attorney General, and two members of the Law Society of Kenya from Nairobi and Mombasa), of the Judicial Service Commission has responsibility for generating and disseminating standard forms and other guidance on judicial functions, such as the now out-of-print and highly sought after Magistrate's Handbook, which contains some directions on record keeping as part of court functions. Generally, the Rules Committee does not specifically address records management, but it has the power to formalise records management policy and procedures in the Courts.
- 35 The Judicial Service Commission Records job cadres are not in line with the Public Service Commission, where over 200 officers have been re-designated and appointed as career-path records managers from job group levels H to M. KNADS has developed a training

syllabus to be implemented for these officers, and the Judicial Service Commission could benefit from the creation of a parallel scheme of service for a records cadre. Currently, its officers in similar positions can progress no further than the equivalent of job group level K. In 2001, a draft scheme of service for archivists was prepared by Mr Joseph K Kuria, Archivist for the Criminal and Civil Divisions of the High Court, but it is unclear whether it is still under review by the Judicial Service Commission and KNADS.

PREVIOUS RECORDS MANAGEMENT REFORM INITIATIVES

- 36 Prior to 1990, record keeping systems throughout the Judiciary were inadequately managed and could not be relied upon to meet the information needs of the courts, government and civil society. Not only were records poorly protected physically, but there was also a general lack of security and accountability. Control systems were largely nonexistent.
- 37 For example, there was open access to the registries where case records were kept and there was little sense of personal accountability for records. The registers used to track case files were often unreliable and incomplete. Files and individual documents were frequently missing, leading to delays and adjournments. Judges complained that there was insufficient information available to them about judgements and case precedents. There was little or no consistent collection of statistics about court sittings to indicate workload, performance and trends.
- 38 Recent improvements in records management are credited to external pressure from the public and multilateral donors, pressure from KNADS and the creation of Assistant Archivist positions. Increased requirements for transparency and accountability in all sectors made court officials aware of the importance of records management.
- 39 In 1990 and 1991, a dialogue between the Director of the National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS), the Chief Justice and the Registrar of the High Court established that there were many records management concerns to be addressed. These concerns included:
- inadequate storage for case files exacerbated by the long retention periods and stringent gazetting requirements mandated by the *Records Disposal Act*
 - frequent misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the types of records that could be destroyed
 - proper preservation of registers and other court records of archival value
 - the disposal of exhibits, vacant Archives Assistant posts and the lack of training for Executive Officers with responsibility for record keeping.
- 40 As a result of this dialogue, a meeting attended by selected Executive Officers in the Court, the Acting Deputy Registrar of the Court of Appeal, the Acting Deputy Registrars of the

Civil and Criminal High Courts, and senior officers of KNADS was held in early 1991. The meeting produced a number of recommendations to take steps to address the above concerns (see Appendix D) and National Archives Director, Mr Musila Musembi, noted at the time that he had confidence that as a result, records management would improve in the courts represented at the meeting. However, the meeting did not adequately address systemic changes to be implemented throughout the judiciary.

- 41 In 1998, KNADS again focussed on the issue of court records management. It recommended a number of steps to be taken towards improving records management in the courts. These recommendations included the review of the *Records Disposal Act*, appraisal of non-current records in the High Court and district courts, and improvement of records management training, quality supplies and records storage. A meeting was held to discuss the recommendations in November 1998. The issues discussed were very similar to the ones previously raised in 1991. In addition, the new High Court Registrar directed the archivists in the High Court to design appropriate registers for recording and controlling movements of files. This directive appears to have been implemented to some effect, but the majority of the recommendations were not introduced. Some of the recommendations made in the 1998 meeting are reiterated in this report's recommendations.
- 42 Circulars to address the problem of missing and lost documents and files in the court system and the disposition of non-current records were issued by the Head of the Public Service on 14 April and 14 November 1999. The latter directed that complaints should be sent directly to KNADS so that it could track and raise awareness of the problem.
- 43 A 1999 report of the Committee on the Administration of Justice indicated that file retrieval, in district registries in particular, was 'a nightmare'. Registries had no systems of monitoring file movements, lawyers, litigants and the general public had unrestricted access to records and many executive officers and clerks had no legal or records management training. The report also found serious disregard of registries by many magistrates. This situation was partially resolved by the retirement of these same magistrates, a practice which has continued through 2004. Replacements are starting to alleviate the resulting staff shortages.
- 44 In 2003, a task force to improve the performance of, and recommend improvements in the registries of government ministries, local authorities, provinces and districts was convened. Its general observation was that registries were unable to provide accurate records and information needed for timely decision making. Earlier that year, KNADS met with the Registrar, court archivists from Nairobi, deputy court registrars and a court executive officer to review the *Records Disposal Act (Cap 14)*. The meeting produced various recommendations made by KNADS that included revisions to clarify certain parts of *Cap 14*, the preparation of a clear schedule of duties for court archivists, the creation of a Records Management Division and the establishment of a judicial records centre. To date, these recommendations have not been acted upon. The Registrar also agreed to include KNADS on a committee that was to be formed for the sustained improvement of judicial records management. This committee now exists but has not been able to meet regularly.

RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT: KEY ISSUES

General Comments

- 45 All stakeholders were open and forthright in their opinions. There was unanimous agreement that recent reforms in records management had greatly improved the efficiency of the judicial service through records management. In the High Court, the Court of Appeal, the Chief Magistrate's Court and the Commercial Court, it is increasingly rare for case files to be lost and even when they are misplaced they can usually be located in a reasonable time. The courts have seen significant improvement in their records management procedures since 1998. However, very few if any, of the procedures that resulted in these improvements have been documented in policies.
- 46 Despite these improvements, documents from case files in the above courts sometimes go missing from files during the conduct of a case, resulting in adjournments or serious delays. Collusion with litigants is thought to be one of the main causes of these missing documents. Misfiling due to severe storage constraints was also mentioned. The improvements observed in the above courts were not generally present in the district courts, where constraints mentioned below (paras 57 to 62) have created very poor record keeping conditions.
- 47 Although they are not documented, there is uniformity in the informal record keeping procedures observed across the courts. This is particularly beneficial to such activities as file classification, file movement, tracking and retrieval. Standard forms generated by the Judicial Rules and Procedures Committee are in general use across the courts and are not usually altered for specific environments.
- 48 Resource constraints have resulted in many useful improvisations in record keeping practice, some of which could be formalised, such as current classification systems and the organisation of execution registries in the Commercial Courts by date range (years) of files.
- 49 Some clerical workers have taken the initiative to receive additional training in records and archives management on their own time and at their own expense, thus adding value to and strengthening their work activities in the courts.
- 50 There is a general awareness at the magistrate/judge level of the importance of records management to the administration of justice and the need for additional support in areas of training, resource allocation and improvement of terms and conditions for records staff. However, this does not seem to have translated into practical action to address concerns.
- 51 There is a general sense of commitment to work ethics and trust in the handling and safeguarding of court records; individual responsibility to records is taken seriously.
- 52 Although the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS) has recently begun working to address records management in the courts, use of its resources and services was uneven. Some senior court officials were not aware of the services and

expressed relief and surprise when informed of the same. This may be due to high turnover as magistrates and other court officials are transferred from one jurisdiction to another. However, the judiciary and KNADS have prime opportunities for regular collaboration on record keeping in the courts.

Policies and Procedures

- 53 Formal policies and procedures do not exist for most court functions and processes including record keeping.
- 54 There is a strong indication that the *Records Disposal Act* (Cap 14) needs to be reviewed in relation to court records because it does not comprehensively cover all courts. In addition, its specified retention requirements for the majority of criminal and traffic ‘petty’ cases records may be unnecessarily long. There have been repeated recommendations to revise the Act by KNADS and the court over the past ten years.
- 55 Judges and magistrates still write out their own notes, and this continues to be the only method of recording proceedings and judgements. The judges interviewed still find it necessary to take responsibility for maintaining copies of their own judgements. Judgements are not widely disseminated and law reports have not been published regularly or kept up to date. A primary aim is to use technology to release judges from the burden of writing down proceedings.
- 56 As noted in paragraph 34, the Judicial Rules and Procedures Committee is a resource for the courts and should be utilised as such with particular reference to revising the ‘gazetting’ procedures in the *Records Disposal Act* (Cap 14) and the production and dissemination of records management procedures manuals for each court registry.

Resource Constraints and Staffing Issues

- 57 There is a serious shortage of space in almost every registry for records storage and also for working on records due to a lack of proper planning for registries and archives. Archives also experience severe storage constraints.
- 58 There are records staff shortages in the registries and archives due to a lack of assessment of staffing requirements and needs.
- 59 Some courts’ archives are staffed by personnel who are not adequately trained in records management and ICT skills or experienced enough to handle their workload, develop policies and procedures, and appraise records to address backlogs. Other courts’ archives are staffed by personnel who have been trained, usually on their own initiative.
- 60 The problem of space constraints throughout the judiciary is compounded by the fact that most of the space and shelving provided for the records is inadequate and inappropriate for

good record keeping. Existing shelving is usually not designed for records storage and the few metal shelving units are often outdated and unstable. Extremely crowded and dusty conditions contribute to deterioration of records and the poor health of records staff. These conditions make many officers reluctant to work in the archives.

- 61 There is a lack of training opportunities and a clearly identified scheme of service and career path for officers with responsibility for records management within the judiciary.
- 62 There is limited advancement for the executive cadre who play an important role in the linking of records management and judicial functions; these officers are critical to the day-to-day supervision and monitoring of records staff and ensuring the implementation of court orders.

Ownership and Awareness of Records Management

- 63 Although it is generally recognised that records management is a critical function underpinning court functions; there is a lack of appreciation of this at top resource-allocation levels which is reflected by a dearth of support for records management improvements from senior management. The judges and magistrates who are aware of the problems do not see addressing these issues as part of their function. Some of them feel hampered by this fact.
- 64 There is high-level recognition that control of court documentation has been a problem and needs to be addressed; this recognition may provide impetus to initiate continued improvements in record keeping.

CURRENT RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE JUDICIARY

- 65 The Records Management Capacity Assessment System's (RMCAS) judicial records and information module was used to gather information from a range of stakeholders, including court officials, judges and magistrates and records staff. This data is presented in this section and in the section on key issues in the judiciary's records management. RMCAS allowed the consultants to efficiently conduct standardised and consistent data collection in the form of interviews with stakeholders and related court functions documentation. Stakeholders were interviewed with questionnaires tailored to their management level (senior, middle or clerk) and position. Key questions were asked of all posts at all levels to verify and authenticate information. Other questions were asked of specific posts in order to draw upon the knowledge required by each person to carry out their job, and to drill down deeper for more detail. RMCAS also allowed the consultants to systematically record the presence or absence of policy and procedures documentation that supported or refuted interviewees' answers.

- 66 A copy of the RMCAS software including the completed assessment was given to the Senior Deputy Registrar, Mr Mureithi. The detailed data collected using RMCAS will allow the courts to retain specific information about the current condition of records management in the courts assessed, an analytic report based on the software's records management capacity diagnostic model and links to training resources. The judiciary can continue to use RMCAS to carry out further assessments of courts not included in this assessment and obtain a broader picture and analysis of records management conditions. RMCAS proved to be an effective tool in the assessment and will be upgraded for public use based on the assessment team's field experience in Kenya.
- 67 RMCAS was also used by the assessment team to analyse the collected data and produce a diagnostic report. This diagnosis is illustrated by the high-level graphical representation in Appendix A that shows the courts scored at 'level 0' against the statements of good practice in most categories. (see Appendix F for an explanation of levels). This analysis helped to generate the assessment team's recommendations.
- 68 During the interviews with stakeholders, views were expressed on the effectiveness of the Judiciary's record keeping systems and attention was drawn to a number of areas. The previous section summarised the key issues facing the Judiciary in relation to the management of information and records, and the scope for further improvement. The following paragraphs include the comments and observations made during the interviews. (see paras 79 to 98)

High Court and Chief Magistrate's Court: Civil Division Registries

- 69 The Civil Division includes the Central Registry, a Civil Court of Appeals Registry, and a Family Registry. Although directives are occasionally issued on records management-related activities, such as the use of movement registers, there are no formal procedures in place. Almost all the staff interviewed would welcome formal guidelines. Case management seminars cover some aspects of records management training for senior staff, and paralegals attend two week seminars, but there is no formal training for other levels of personnel who keep records. Senior management was not aware whether the strategic plan in development for the courts includes provision for records management training. It is felt that regular training would be an incentive to staff to accept job transfers to court archives, which is currently seen as a 'dead-end' career path.
- 70 The Civil Division Registry is one of the few in the courts to use a basic automated file tracking system in conjunction with a manual dispatch register. However, this system is not networked and senior management believes that a networked system would enhance both the tracking system and dissemination of the daily cause lists. Information on file covers is comprehensive and includes the case identifier (alpha prefix, case number and year of case) to track the file.
- 71 Although colour coded folders are no longer used due to supply constraints, most files are still stored in correct sequence. Documents in the files usually include proceedings and

pleadings. Related exhibit case file covers contain the case number and the name of the person or agency that has produced the exhibit. Files are stored on open shelves without sufficient support (see Appendix E).

- 72 Although staff indicated that the registry has a closed access policy, this is unwritten, making it difficult to enforce. Files are generally closed to court staff not affiliated with the registry and are now able to be generated and retrieved with enough regularity to provide some case statistics now gathered by the new planning section of the court. However, in the recent past clerks from other registries were allowed in the file storage area and this contributed to misfiling, loss of files and an inability to properly track file movements. Signs prohibiting the presence of other staff posted in the registry attest to this problem.
- 73 The situation has been improved by the introduction of registers for each registry activity. There are separate registers for each activity, including dispatch to courts, as well as diaries held by each clerk to track every document that comes across his or her desk. These diaries are audited periodically by the Chief Executive Officer. Separate registers track files that are returned to the registry from courts and other approved locations. The registry's cash office collects fees for every civil function, and collection of these fees are tracked using registers so that the next steps in the case can progress.
- 74 In order to lessen the chance of lost files in transit, proofreading of typed judgements made by the Deputy Registrar and the setting of hearing dates are carried out within the same room of the Registry. However, centralising all of these activities has created crowded conditions and perusal of files by parties to cases is not strictly monitored beyond ensuring that the parties have paid perusal fees. This puts the security of files and documents at risk.
- 75 The Family Registry deals with cases of succession, divorce, subordinate court civil appeals, adoptions, civil suits, miscellaneous applications and division of matrimonial properties. It was separated from the main civil registry in 2000. Records dating before 1989 have been transferred to the Civil Registry Archives. The registry currently holds files from 2000 onwards and is experiencing severe storage constraints which negatively affect preservation and retrieval of files. Files are stored on open shelves.
- 76 The Civil Appeals Registry deals with cases from all civil subordinate courts and tribunals, fixes dates of hearings and generates memos of appeal, proceedings and judgements. Records are arranged chronologically by year for pending and decided cases. There is a clear need for basic records management training in the Civil Appeals registry where files are stored on open shelves spine-side up, thus increasing the chances that loose documents will become misfiled, lost or damaged. The Registry generates daily cause lists that are kept for only six months, although all registers are permanent. Currently decrees, or summarised judgements, are kept in the Civil Division Archives for 12 years.

High Court and Chief Magistrate's Court: Criminal Division, Traffic Registry

- 77 The Traffic Court Registry is very overcrowded in terms of both record keeping space and

files storage. It has poor ventilation. One staff member was observed using a mask to filter the dusty air while working with records. Overcrowding on the open shelves is due partially to a massive backlog of unexecuted and pending cases that currently number over 250,000. These backlogs also result in uncollected fines revenue that might otherwise be applied to rectify registry conditions. Some costs are saved by using plain paper covers for the charge sheets generated for the police. Although some cases are withdrawn if arrests cannot be made, these few exceptions do not appear to alleviate the backlog.

- 78 The Registry generates about 100 new cases per day and finalised case material is usually sent to their Archives on a weekly basis. However, the irregular flow of new paperwork from other registries prevents regularly scheduled and uniformly batched transfers. The file tracking system utilises registers in conjunction with a case number index stored on computer diskette. Security of files in the registry has been made tighter by requiring the thumbprint of anyone who requests the release of documents. Staff members have a general idea of how many new and pending cases are on file and are able to generate pending case statistics on a monthly basis. Under current law, all traffic records are held in the Registry or Archives for three years from the date of action. Traffic registry and archives staff feel this retention period is excessive.

High Court and Chief Magistrate's Court: Criminal Division, Criminal Registry

- 79 The Criminal Registry files are one of the few records groups stored in file cabinets but the assessment team did not have the opportunity to observe the conditions of the files within the cabinets. The Criminal Registry is much less congested than all of the other registries observed and staff are able to keep their desks clear to deal with current record keeping. About 20 new cases are registered each day. Plea or charge sheets are received by the registry and are registered in a plea register and indexed by case name and number. Case file covers include the following detailed information: prosecutor, hearing date, case number and year, trial court, date of charge and judgement. Records are arranged chronologically by year according to status, eg, fresh cases not yet heard and cases where hearings have started. Tracking of file movements in individual fresh case desk diaries was introduced about three years ago. After hearings, files are returned to the Registry and registered. A finalisation register is used to track files that have been sent to and received by the Archives.

High Court and Chief Magistrate's Court: Criminal Division, Criminal and Civil Divisions Archives

- 80 The Criminal and Civil Divisions Archives is located in the basement of the High Court and was established in 1985. It receives closed records generated by the High Court and Chief Magistrate's Court including traffic court records, records of inquests, fire inquiries, preliminary investigations of embezzlement, private prosecutions of civil cases and

criminal case records. Records are appraised regularly at the end of their retention periods, but the sheer volume of holdings has only allowed appraisal of files up to 1998. The Archives is not aware of any non-current files still held in related registries. Associated exhibits are also stored for safe-keeping in the Archives so they can be produced in the High Court and the Chief Magistrate's Court.

- 81 A master file index allows the archives to track the number of records acquired on an annual basis. The master file tracks the registry to which files are loaned, and indexes them according to case numbers and year. The Archives also keeps records of the copies of material they generate upon request along with a record of the 50 Kenya Shilling charge applied for application to the Archives for information. Most records are retained for three years according to *Cap 14*, including records of direct (ticketed) traffic fines. The Archives is of the opinion that this period is excessive for retention of direct traffic fines records. There is no provision in *Cap 14* for re-appraisal of records.
- 82 Exhibits are registered according to the related court, year and case number. A diary of exhibit movements is kept that includes the police station of origin and the name of the officer to whom an exhibit has been released. Although most exhibits are held in secure storage areas, car seats associated with traffic cases are stored in the Archives' corridors and are used as furniture by Archives visitors and staff on break. Exhibits in secure storage areas are piled on the floor, as there is a severe lack of shelving.
- 83 The basement space for the Criminal and Civil Division Archives has experienced flooding in the past that damaged records. Some records are stored on open shelves very close to the floor and are at risk if flooding occurs again. Records that have been appraised and are waiting to be 'gazetted' are stored stacked on corridor floors due to space constraints. These conditions contradict the *Records Disposal Act*, constitute a fire hazard and are part of a sound argument for a central judicial records centre.
- 84 'Gazetting' (or publishing of the lists of records to be destroyed) procedures as outlined in paragraph 32 are burdensome; the cost to 'gazette' the number of records that have accumulated has increased to the point where the courts can no longer afford the process within their approved budgets. This situation is contributing to the severe overcrowding and storage space constraints in the court archives.

Court of Appeal Registry

- 85 The majority of material in the Court of Appeal Registry consists of bound copies of the documents submitted to the Court. The Court of Appeal is the court of record and all four copies (for the Judge, the Registrar, the plaintiff and the defendant) are technically required to be permanently retained. However, in practice it is felt that this is excessive and exact duplicates are appraised for destruction. Although the Court of Appeal has sub-registries in its out-stations, the main registry ultimately receives copies of all appeals records. The Court is actively involved in the current strategic plan under development for the judiciary and anticipates that the plan will include the automation of records tracking. The Court is

able to generate statistics based on its activities but does not do so on a regular basis. Due to its large number of pending cases, the Registry suffers from severe files storage space constraints; a number of files are stacked on the floor (see Appendix E). Staff desks are very close together in a crowded space.

Kibera District Court and Makadara District Court

- 86 The Kibera District Court hears primarily criminal cases as well as some traffic cases. It is located in a very poor and dangerous area that engenders serious security issues. It also suffers from such a severe lack of records storage space that 1991 to 1997 records are stored in its open reception area and are used as bedding by court guard dogs. These records are also exposed to rain, dust and theft, and are difficult to keep in order, much less retrieve. There is no adequate archival storage at the court and most areas are congested with very poor air circulation. The archives space is very dusty and is also used to store unserviceable office equipment. Staff at the court told the assessment team that the required detailed tracking procedures delay court proceedings due to the small staff at its disposal. The court functions suffer from a lack of trained staff that results in incorrect entries of judicial orders or proceedings, forcing the few magistrates (only four of the required six positions are filled) to spend extra time reviewing documentation.
- 87 The Makadara District Court is said to be the busiest criminal court in Nairobi as it covers a very large jurisdiction. It handles 30,000 to 50,000 cases per year, and generates an average of around 200 new files daily. Although file tracking is a priority, space constraints make access and retrieval difficult and there are periodic complaints about missing case files and documents. In cases of missing files, no file reconstruction is attempted. Movement and dispatch registers are used, as well as individual diaries to show actions have been taken. The court archives use a retrieval register to track transfers. Like Kibera, the eight courts and 42 records staff find that the detailed tracking actions create an overwhelming amount of work. File audits are rarely if ever, carried out. There are no documented records management procedures. As in other courts, ‘gazetting’ requirements hamper regular disposal of records and staff are not adequately trained. At Makadara there is no archivist, although the Archives Assistant holds a certificate in records and archives management.

Milimani Commercial Courts

- 88 The Milimani Commercial Courts were separated from the Civil Courts and established in 1988. Its senior management expects to formally define its mission once the judiciary’s strategic plan is in place. At the point of separation, some previous 21 years of inactive files were transferred for storage in an archives space in the Income Tax Building across the street. An immediate result of this action was a decrease in complaints about missing files and an increase in the efficiency of file retrieval in the central registry and sub-registries. Missing files became the individual responsibility of the new staff in the registries. Streamlining of files to sub-registries also improved file retrieval. The main

divisions of the court include: decrees, warrants, dispatch of files, hearing dates settings, hearing records, proceedings, executions, assessments and cases arranged chronologically by year ranges (1994, 1995 to 1997, 1998 to 1999, 2000, 2001 to current). The sub-registries include the cash office, process office, auctioneers licensing, executions, 1994 cases, 1995 to 1997 cases, 1998 to 1999 cases, 2000 cases, warrant executions, proceedings, hearing dates, and stores.

- 89 Although the Commercial Court post-dates the *Records Disposal Act* and is therefore not mentioned in it, the Court presumes its records fall under the *Act* by default and adheres to the specified records schedules. Dismissal files (records of cases that have been inactive for three years) are kept during their retention period on separate shelving units until transfer to ‘gazettement’ storage.

Central Registry

- 90 The central registry prepares summonses, orders, warrants, daily applications, assessments and dispatches decrees and judgments. It collects the requisite fees, registers actions and files the relevant documentation. Current files are shelved in order of receipt by year and file number. The central registry stores files with judgments, insurance case files and bank case files under lock and key to ensure they are not vulnerable to tampering.
- 91 Lawyers can access files in the registry upon application, but perusal is unsupervised due to space constraints. Although lawyers are considered trustworthy officers of the court, documents under perusal habitually go missing. While tracking of files in registers is effective, tracking of individual documents within the files is problematic. There is no current procedure for checking completeness of files. Missing files have also occurred at the point of the start of a case, mid-way points, or at the point of transcription (typing). Misfiling is thought by clerks to be due to negligence or occasional forgetfulness due to the high level of file activity and constant use of registers by more than one person. As in other courts, although the unwritten rule is that only Executive Officers have unlimited access to files, there is no formal access policy to protect records.
- 92 When cases are transferred to the Commercial Courts they are assigned new numbers that are communicated to the court of origin for tracking purposes. The Commercial Court daily cause lists include the actual year of the case hearing and the original start year from the court of origin. Cause lists are kept on diskettes that are used no more than twice (to prevent virus infection) and kept in locked storage. Cause lists are posted on the court’s web site and disseminated manually.
- 93 In general, the Commercial Courts suffer from a lack of storage space and serious resource constraints. Budgeted supplies do not appear to suffice for current levels of requisition. Some registries make do by using extra criminal registers, a practice that may be thrifty but will lead to confusion over time.
- 94 Lack of specific training on judicial functions (such as assessment, in which staff rely entirely on the ‘Guidebook on the Assessment of Court Fees’ if they have access to this

publication) and judicial records management is also a significant issue with the personnel interviewed. Beyond a brief period of induction training, there is no formal programme for personnel transferred to the courts. Staff also feel that training does not lead to promotion and consequently there is a lack of incentive to pursue further training outside the courts; although the judiciary will pay fifty percent of the costs incurred. Low pay was also felt to impede the pursuit of external training.

Sub-registries

95 Conditions in the sub-registries were noted as follows:

- The cash office keeps its receipt books on the floor of a locked room now actively used as an office by a cashier. Receipt books tend to be kept beyond audited periods and cannot be disposed of without written authorisation of the Registrar.
- Serious to severe space constraints for records storage and record keeping activities were observed in the cash office, the process registry, the auctioneers licensing registry, the chronological registries (1994, 1995 to 1997, 1998 to 1999, 2000), the hearing dates registry, the warrants execution registry and in stores.
- The executions registry faces large challenges in file tracking, due to the previous year's recent lack of registers. However, documents are minuted in files, helping to track completeness. Seals for executions are kept under lock and key at all times.
- The 2000 registry shares space with the warrants execution registry and lacks a proper counter space to provide some security for the many active files it holds. Both registries try to address this issue by ensuring that one staff person is always onsite and by diligent use of file movement registers. The warrants registry staff members tend to work long hours in order to ensure due process of cases.
- Many registries store files held for dismissal along with current files because the Archives is so overcrowded and understaffed.
- The Hearing Dates Registry also holds matrimonial maintenance files and divorce cases that overflow from the Civil Courts and are transferred to the Commercial Courts. Divorce case files of archival value are stored in areas for active files and are infrequently, if ever, transferred to Archives.
- The stores reports a continual shortage of colour coded files and an inadequate budget for requisition levels.
- The Proceedings Registry is severely crowded and understaffed, causing delays in cases due to the long time it takes individuals to properly proofread transcripts while simultaneously dealing with public requests.

Archives

- 96 The Commercial Court Archives in the Income Tax Building is almost completely without proper space, staff levels and equipment. The building has been largely dormant for some years and is about to undergo major renovation. It is partially occupied by the *Kadhis* Courts and the Archives. There is inadequate shelving for files and many bundles have to be stored on the floor which is rarely cleaned. The environment is a health hazard to Archives staff who have not been able to requisition dust masks, shelving or proper cleaning equipment.
- 97 The three staff members arrange bundled files by year and tag them appropriately, but retrieval is extremely difficult due to the storage conditions outlined above. Records dating from 1962 to 1990 are the most difficult to retrieve, as they fall into a processing backlog. Pending files over three years old are in separate storage from inactive records. The archives staff members keep two movement registers. Files that are not returned to the archives are not pursued due to lack of staff authority.
- 98 Files held for dismissal are stored loose on the floor of a derelict room open to damage from light and damp as a result of unshaded and broken windows. These materials are effectively destroyed before ‘gazettement’ procedures have been carried out.
- 99 None of the current staff have archives or records training, although an archivist is supposed to join their team at some point in the near future. Currently, two of the three staff members are not on active duty.

RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT: RECOMMENDATIONS

- 100 The recommendations are intended to improve the judiciary’s scores against the statements of good practice contained in RMCAS. The statements are based on international standards and models such as the International Standard on Records Management (ISO 15489). Implementation of these recommendations will make the Kenya judiciary compliant with ISO 15489 and ensure that the judiciary’s records management utilises recognised policies and practices.

General Recommendations

- 101 All legal and judicial activities depend on good record keeping and therefore legal and judicial reform must include records management improvements if it is to be effective. This will directly benefit the success of the reform projects as well as improving record keeping conditions in the field.

- 102 The Judiciary needs to prepare to provide access to information as demanded by the public and to implement any future Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts. Likewise, legislation on electronic records was drafted in 2002 and may be implemented in the near future. Preparation should involve improved records management in all areas.

Awareness and Ownership

- 103 There is a need to raise the awareness of, and expectations for, records management with senior management, magistrates and judges through meetings with National Archives staff and other advisors where necessary. These senior personnel need to be empowered to improve record keeping conditions.
- 104 A post of Deputy Registrar should be created and appointed to oversee and be responsible for the records management functions in the judiciary on a national level to address this key element in the judiciary and to champion reforms to improve records and information management systems.
- 105 Staff members of all courts should be made aware that they have the option to store records at the nearest KNADS provincial records centres. KNADS should actively work with the courts to explore this as an effective alternate storage solution.

Business Function – Records Management Integration

- 106 There is inconsistent statistics generation among the courts. The new planning office of the courts should implement statistics collection across the courts from each registry and archives. This will ensure that accurate and regular information on court functions is available to the judiciary and to the public.

ICT Integration - Records Management

- 107 In order to prepare for future automation, an effective, efficient and reliable manual system must be established first to ensure authentic data sources exist for automated systems. As noted in a 6 June 2003 circular from the Head of Public Service, superimposing electronic records systems on collapsed or inefficient paper-based systems does not lead to successful solutions.
- 108 Any future automation projects should not be considered without first preparing a study of user requirements and conducting a pilot project to test system implementation, with special attention to maintaining the necessary reliable infrastructure (eg, constant electrical power source and safe wiring of networks) in a clean, safe environment.#

- 109 An automated court information system should not be considered without prior provision of basic ICT training for all levels of staff, especially records staff.

Laws, Policies and Procedures

- 110 *The Disposal Act* should be reviewed by the Judicial Rules and Procedures Committee to ensure it covers Kenya courts comprehensively and to re-visit retention periods for petty criminal and traffic cases records, as previously discussed by KNADS and the courts according to the recommendations they drafted.
- 111 The Judicial Service Commission should develop an appropriate scheme of service for officers throughout the courts system (from clerical level to CEOs) who deal with records in order to retain, train and promote these staff. There is a need to harmonise the Judicial Service Commission job groups with the Public Service Commission job groups and provide a clear career path for the records cadre.
- 112 The Judicial Rules and Procedures Committee in conjunction with the Chief Justice should move with speed to review and revise disposal requirements for court records in order to simplify and make cost effective ‘gazettement’ procedures (eg, file number ranges instead of individual listings). Currently cost estimates for gazetting according to existing procedures are at Kenya Shillings 6,000,000 and are prohibitive.
- 113 As indicated in a Court of Appeal procedure, all courts should aim to have judgments typed or word processed before their delivery to interested parties in order to avoid the current difficulties in deciphering handwriting that can result in mis-action, inaction or adjournment of cases.
- 114 Secure, monitored space should be provided for perusal of files by advocates and other parties in order to prevent missing documents and files, and collusion between clerks and litigants.

Resources and Training

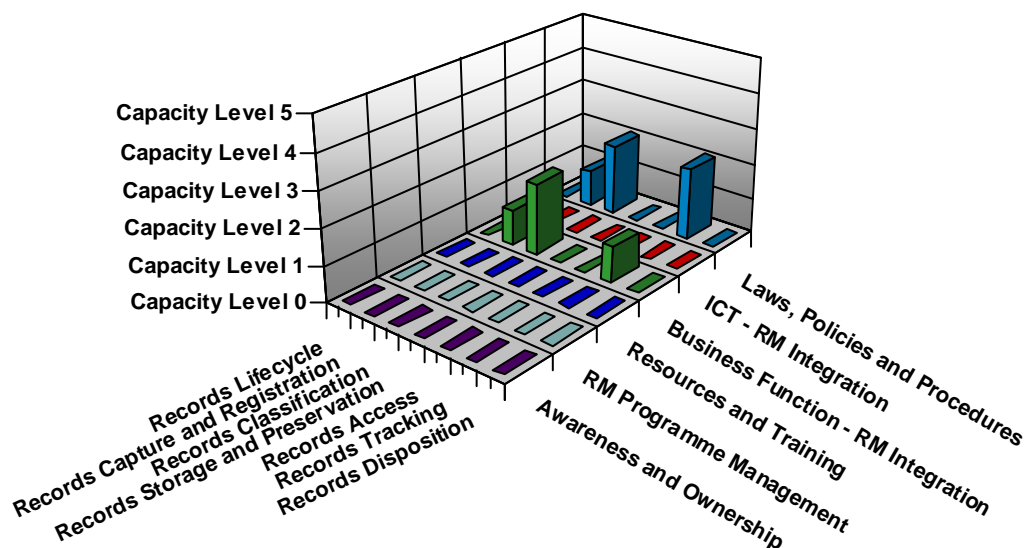
- 115 Training in records management should be provided for the chief executive cadre to enable it to supervise and monitor the records manage function. Ideally, the training should be provided by experts in judicial record keeping. It should last at least a month and be tailored to suit local needs; visits to Canada and or Singapore would be helpful.
- 116 A systematic assessment of staffing needs and deployment in each and every registry and archives within the judiciary should be carried out with a view to addressing staff shortages and workflow.
- 117 The Judiciary needs to make a major investment in records storage space and equipment that includes a clean environment and proper shelving to ensure preservation and retrieval

of records and encourage good staff morale. The Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service is legally mandated to provide advisory services on these issues within the public service including the judiciary; these services are obtainable country-wide through the provincial records centres in Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, Kakamega and Kisumu. The Judiciary has not fully utilised these services and is encouraged to liaise with KNADS to do so.

- 118 The judiciary should also explore the possibility of using KNADS' provincial records centres for records storage if it can not provide proper space within the courts. In cases like the Kibera District Court, land has been designated for the courts that could be used for the construction of proper records storage if it were made available.

Records Management Programme Management

- 119 Many of the above recommendations would not be needed if there were a records management programme in place within the judiciary. The formalisation of policy, addition of a Deputy Registrar post for records and information management, regular and formal collaboration with KNADS, and a clear scheme of service for a judicial records cadre would go far towards the establishment of a records management programme. A records management programme will institutionalise good record keeping practices and procedures, prepare courts for the transition to electronic records and Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation, and enable the accountability and transparency of the judiciary.

KENYA JUDICIARY ASSESSMENT SUMMARY REPORT¹

	Records Disposition	Records Tracking	Records Access	Records Storage and	Records Classification	Records Capture and	Records Lifecycle
■ Laws, Policies and Procedures	0	2	0	0	2	1	0
■ ICT - RM Integration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
■ Business Function - RM Integration	0	1	0	0	2	1	0
■ Resources and Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
■ RM Programme Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
■ Awareness and Ownership	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

¹ Although many effective procedures are in place, few if any, are formalised in policy. Level 2 scores reflect the fact that many records management processes are effective and uniform across the judiciary. According to strict RMCAS scoring definitions, records capture, registration, classification and tracking are actually at Level 1. See Appendix F for an explanation of scoring levels.

LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED

Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service

Mr Musila Musembi, Director (ret. as of 1 July 2004)
Mr John M'reria, Assistant Director

High Court and Chief Magistrate's Court - Criminal and Traffic Divisions

Mr Justice K O Muchelulu, Chief Magistrate
Mr Justice William Ouko, former High Court Registrar
Mr Charles Njai, High Court Registrar
Mr Mureithi, Senior Deputy Registrar and Personal Assistant to the Chief Justice
Mrs Lydia Achode, Acting Chief Court Administrator
Mr H K N Kinjua, Chief Executive Officer
Mr Benjamin Kinuthia, Archivist III and IT Specialist
Mr Richard Wambua, Executive Officer, Criminal Registry
Mr Silas Paul Bwire, Executive Officer, Court Section, Proofreading and Interpretation
Ms Mary Njoki, Executive Officer, Traffic & Sign Lang Interpreter
Mr Joseph Kibiru Ndung'u, Archivist - Criminal Division
Mr Simon N Njeru, Senior Clerical Officer - Traffic Section
Mr Erick Litabalia, Clerical Officer
Mr Anthony Gataka, Clerical Officer
Mr Nicholas M Kivevu, Clerical Officer
Ms Lydiah Asibiko, Clerical Officer
Ms Leah Ndirangu, Clerical Officer
Ms Pacifica Nyanchama, Clerical Officer
Ms Maryanne Wamaitha, Senior Archives Assistant III
Mr Joseph Okeno, Clerical Officer
Mr Edwin Muchemi, Senior Clerical Officer
Ms Beatrice Mburu, Senior Archives Assistant

High Court - Civil and Family Divisions

Ms Nelly Matheka, Deputy Registrar - Civil Division
Ms Scholastica Ndambuki, Deputy Registrar - Family Court
Mr Timothy Onamu, Chief Executive Officer, Civil Division
Mr Justus Mulei, Executive Officer, Family Division
Mr Joseph O G Getanke, Executive Officer, Civil Division
Mr Thomas Mokaya, Executive Officer, Civil Appeals

Mr Joseph K Kuria, Archivist Civil Division

Court of Appeal

Mr Thomas S Luvuga, Deputy Registrar
Mr Peter Kamau, Senior Clerical Officer- Civil
Mr Samwell Kimburi Muriithi, Executive Officer I
Mr Daniel Musyoka, Senior Clerical Officer - Criminal
Ms Jean Muthoni, Archivist II

Kibera District Criminal and Traffic Court

Ms Catherine Mwangi, Senior Resident Magistrate and Station Head
Mrs Karanja, CEO
Ms Scholastica Kima

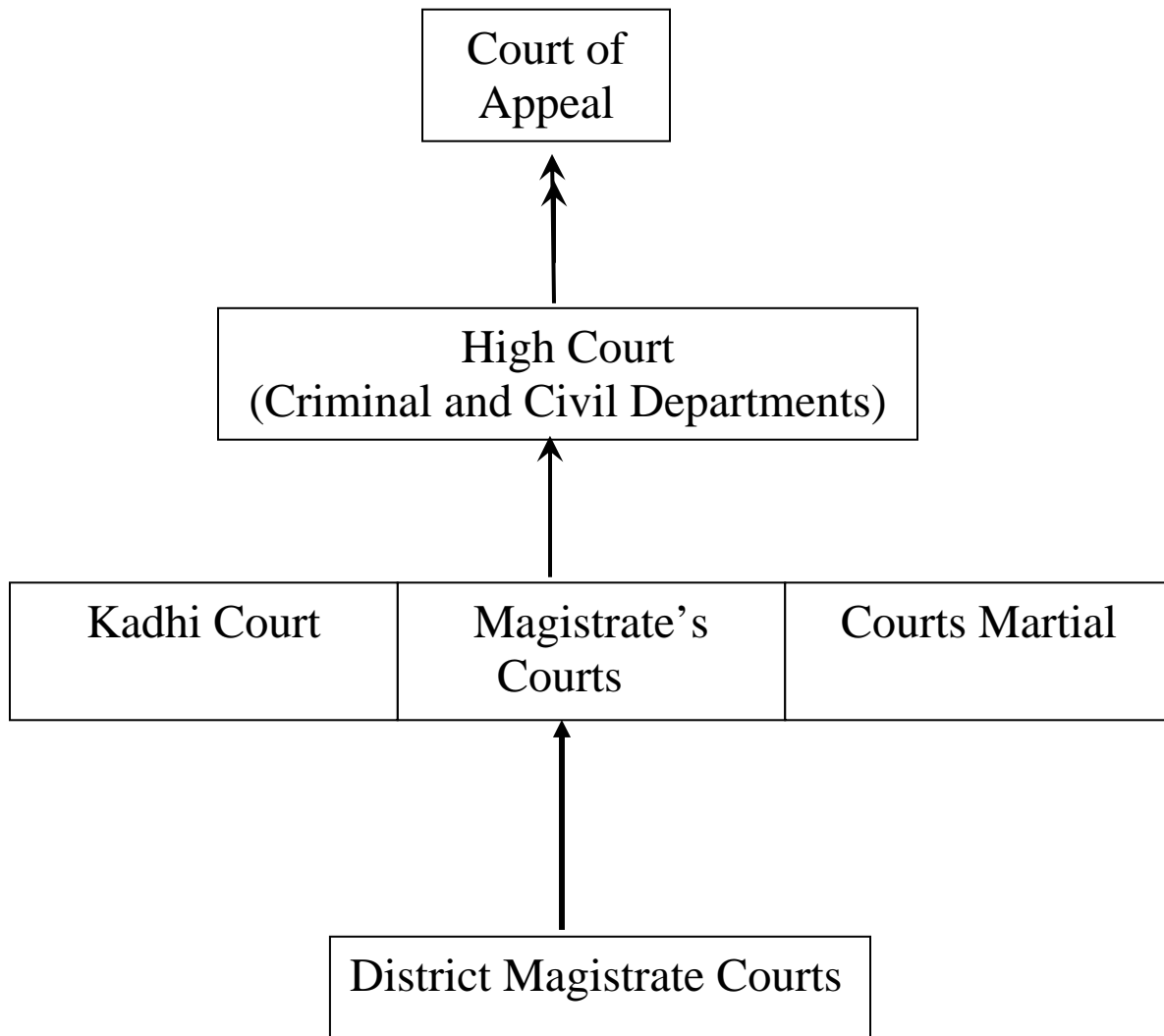
Makadara District Criminal and Traffic Court

Mr Reuben Nyakundi, Acting Chief Magistrate
Ms Ruth Onsarigo, Senior Executive Officer
Ms Betty Sandagi, Archives Assistant
Ms Jane Muthee, Executive Assistant
Mr Justus Kingathia, Executive Officer I
Mr Francis Muya, Clerical Officer (Records)

Milimani Commercial Court

Ms Omondi, Chief Magistrate
Mr Odhiambo, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Magistrate Division
Mr Ngila, Chief Executive Officer, High Court Division
Mr David Engoete, Clerical Officer
Mr John Okech Atula, Clerical Officer
Ms Patricia Nundu Kilele, Senior Clerical Officer
Ms Emily Wambui Kimani, Clerical Officer
Ms Mercy M Njeru, Executive Officer
Ms Janet Pisui, Supplies Officer
Mr Eric A A Obendo, Executive Officer II
Mr Enock K Kinaro, Executive Officer
Mr Paul N Mwendwa, Executive Officer
Mr Nicholas N Kieti, Senior Clerical Officer
Mr Sammy M Sintane, Senior Clerical Officer
Mr Stephen Wakwe, Clerical Officer, Commercial Court Archives

COURT STRUCTURE



**KENYA NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION SERVICE:
HIGH COURT SEMINAR RECOMMENDATIONS FEBRUARY 1991**

SEMINAR RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. The participants recommended that the Chief Justice may wish to consider to remind Resident Magistrates to give greater attention to the management of court records. It was noted that the management of non-current court records is not satisfactory in some courts.
2. It was recommended that it was recommended that Magistrates should ensure that all court records due for destruction are promptly destroyed in accordance with the Records Disposal Act Cap. 14 in order to avoid uneconomical usage of office space and equipment.
3. Executive Officers must ensure that non-current records are properly maintained in line with the instructions contained in the Office of the President's circular letter Ref. No.1 OP. 1/48A/66 of 28th November, 1985.
4. Registers for civil, criminal, and traffic cases, and all other records which need to be permanently preserved must be well safeguarded by the courts until the time when they may be transferred to Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service.
5. It was strongly recommended that the disposal of exhibits (objects) be determined and made at the earliest time possible - possibly by the time of a judgment of a particular case.
6. The existing Archives Assistants posts should be filled at the earliest time possible.
7. The Registrar of the High Court and the Director of the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service should consider the possibility of organising similar seminars (meetings) for other Executive Officers and Executive Assistants working in the courts.

CURRENT RECORDS STORAGE CONDITIONS IN THE JUDICIARY



Overcrowding on the shelves in the High Court Civil Division Registry



Files stored spine-side up on severely crowded shelving



Bound files stacked on the floor of the Court of Appeals Registry



Records stacked on the floor of the Court of Appeal Archives

RMCAS SUMMARY ASSESSMENT REPORT SCORING LEVELS

Level 0: Records management policies, systems and processes are non-existent or informal/*ad hoc*/personal and ineffective. There is little or no use of ICT for creating or managing records.

Level 1: Basic records management policies, systems and processes are defined but are not consistently and effectively applied across the organisation. There is little or no connection between records management and business functions. There is little or no effective use of ICT for managing records.

Level 2: Key records management policies, systems and processes are in place across the organisation and are working. The organisation recognises the need to link records management policies, systems and processes to business functions but has not yet achieved this. ICT is used for records and information management but its effectiveness is limited.

Level 3: Records management policies, systems and processes are in place across the organisation, are working effectively, are linked to business functions and support organisational management goals. A mixture of ICT and paper systems is used in the creation and management of records and information.

Level 4: Records management policies, systems and processes are in place, applied effectively, are integrated with all business functions and support organisational governance and accountability. Policies, systems and processes are reviewed and improved regularly. Extensive use is made of ICT to create, manage and exploit records and information.

Level 5: A knowledge management environment is in place and used effectively to support all business functions and governance objectives and the needs of all stakeholders. A learning culture exists in which monitoring, compliance and improvement takes place continuously. Advanced technology systems and networks are used for the creation and sharing of records and to enable effective communication and collaboration within the organisation and with other partners.

**WORKSHOP ON RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE,
ABUJA, NIGERIA**

25th – 26th AUGUST, 2003

KENYA POSITION PAPER

WORKSHOP ON RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE,
ABUJA, NIGERIA,
25th – 26th AUGUST, 2003

KENYA POSITION PAPER

Introduction

There exists a very close relationship between governance and records keeping. Well-managed records are essential tools for good governance. They facilitate the achievement of transparency and accountability in public administration, as indeed in all other types of administrations. When government records are easily accessible to members of the public whenever they want to verify actions and activities of public servants, a relationship based on trust between the government and the governed is greatly strengthened. In such an environment, evidence will be made available whenever needed. The public service will then enjoy the confidence and the support of its citizens. Unfortunately, this relationship has, until recently, not received the necessary attention. As a result, the state of records management has often been unsatisfactory, and especially in developing countries. Kenya has not been an exception. The consequences have been very serious: mistrust, suspicion and upheavals.

Evidence clearly shows that many developing countries have severe records management problems. As a result, efficiency and effectiveness in public administration is directly undermined in a number of ways: the administration of justice is greatly compromised if court records cannot be easily retrieved or are lost; and all government revenue cannot be fully collected because the records on which their calculations must be based on are not comprehensive enough, or were never created. It will also be very difficult to give an accurate account on how public funds were utilized if records are in disorder. High expenditure such as on personnel emoluments and which affect the Gross Domestic Product cannot also be accounted for in an environment where records are not accurate. Furthermore, in an environment in which records are poorly kept, proper audit is practically impossible. These are very costly failures. It is for these reasons that the Government of Kenya has, through a number of policy statements and initiatives, determined that measures must now be taken to improve records management.

Impact of Poor Records Management Acknowledged.

Kenya, like many other developing countries, has been implementing wide-ranging public sector reforms. The major objectives of these reforms are of course to improve performance in the Civil Service, as well as to upgrade transparency and accountability in the Country. In order to provide guidelines for the achievement of these objectives, the Government of the Republic of Kenya published a manual in July, 2001 titled “*A Strategy for Performance Improvement in the Public Service.*” In page 55 this manual, the relationship between records management and governance was recognized. The manual observed that:- “The state of the file registries of many public service delivery departments and units is appalling. Failures in the filing systems lead to delays and poor service, frustration on the part of the public, and opportunity for corruption.”

The administration of justice in any country depends, to a large extent, on efficient records management. Justice will be delayed or even miscarried in an environment in which records cannot be easily traced, or when vital court records are missing or lost. This point was brought out very clearly in a Report of the Committee on the Administration of Justice which was published in 1998. The Committee had been appointed by the Chief Justice in the Republic of Kenya to investigate how the provision of justice in the Country could be improved. It is very important to note that the report of this Committee identified good records management as a critical factor without which the objective of providing improved administration of justice could be achieved. With regard to the court registries the Committee observed (page 27) as follows:-

“Both criminal and civil litigation start and end in the court registries. An inefficient registry can be frustrating both to litigants and judicial officers. The Committee inspected several registries throughout the country. Coupled with this first hand knowledge the Committee heard that most registries are extremely congested and lack the necessary filing cabinets and racks. This aspect, more than anything else, has been a major contributing factor to the disappearance and misplacement of court files. Retrieval of files from these registries can be a nightmare. Registries have no system of monitoring the movement of files and no system of cataloguing exists. It was also submitted that lawyers, litigants and even members of the public have unrestricted access to registries. The Committee was informed that the administrative hierarchy in most registries is seriously wanting and not clearly defined.”

Kenya is an agricultural country. Land matters and especially issues on land ownership are therefore very high in the national agenda. Therefore, efficient management of this resource is completely critical for faster economic growth in Kenya. However, efficient management of this resource is, to a large extent, dependent on access to well organized records. Unfortunately, land records in the Country have, in many cases, not been well

managed. In this regard, an “*Interim Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Land Law System of Kenya (page 33)*” made this most revealing observation:-

“The management of land registries is appalling to say the least. The security of documents and records is in serious jeopardy and the day to day operations of the registries has exposed the sanctity of title to serious questions. Most of the land registries are ill-equipped, and record keeping is haphazard. In the Inland Registry at Nairobi and the Coast Registry at Mombasa, the system of record keeping is manual and records are either retrieved from deed files and old volumes. Some of them are torn, tattered and/or illegible due to overuse, age, and poor storage conditions. This is the same with the district land registries where the old kalamazoo binders are torn, insufficient or unavailable to cater for registration of new title. Oftentimes seals are left unsecured, green cards are freely floating around the registry and strong rooms are not locked exposing vital documents to risk. This mess in the management of records in registries, coupled with corrupt practices, has resulted in increased numbers of duplicated titles, loss and forgery of registry records thereby compromising the position of the holders of valid title documents.”

Developing Solutions

Apart from the above statements, concerns have also been expressed in many other forums. The Government is now determined to take action to improve the situation. This is of course critical for efficient delivery of service to the citizens, the very essence of good governance.

2.1 Improving Manual Systems

The Government report titled “A Strategy for Performance Improvement in the Public Service” has identified a number of major solutions for records management problems currently being experienced. The first solution, and probably the most important, is the need to take the necessary measures to improve the paper-based records keeping systems. Significantly, this particular report (page 55) stated as follows:-

“However, it is recognized that the application of computer-based technologies may not always be the best short-term way of enhancing performance and that simply ensuring that long-standing, often manual systems work properly may produce marked improvement.”

Now, in order to improve the current paper-based manual systems, a number of things were found to be necessary. First, it was found very necessary to thoroughly diagnose the problems which have caused the registries to be in the appalling situation described above. To achieve this objective, the Government appointed a Task Force on Records Management. See appendix for the terms of reference of this Task Force. It is noted that the Task Force is expected to complete its work by June 2004. It will of course present specific recommendations for consideration. This is the first time Kenya has had such a Task Force since independence, an indication of how serious the Government is taking this matter.

There is a sense of urgency in the Government's attempt to find solutions to the records management problems. In this regard therefore, certain measures have begun to be taken to improve the situation. For example, it is well known that most registries are poorly staffed. Some of them need additional staff. But at the same time, the quality of staff involved in records management needs to be drastically improved. In this regard therefore, the Government has already re-designated about 70 posts of Executive Officers of various grades to Records Management Officers. Many of them are in the middle management level. In addition, 149 posts of Procurement Assistants have also been re-designated to Records Management Officers. These are in supervisory grade. This will substantially increase the work force directly deployed in records management sector. The now re-designated officers are awaiting redeployment. It is observed that this additions will drastically improve the quality and numbers of staff directly involved in records management.

The next step will be to urgently mount short induction courses (at least one week) in order to enable the officers to have basic knowledge in records management. A more comprehensive training programme at Certificate and Diploma levels would be needed. This is equally urgent. Without this, the immense benefits, which are expected to result from the above re-designations would be greatly reduced.

The World Bank may wish to consider to assist in this very needy area. We note with appreciation that it (World Bank) has already fully supported the training of twelve (12) civil servants working in the area of records management to undertake a course at ESAMI, Arusha, Tanzania. Kenya would greatly appreciate to have this World Bank support expanded to cover all or most of the newly re-designated Records Management Officers.

Computerization

The Second solution identified by the Government with regard to poor records management is computerization. There are immense benefits which can be enjoyed by both the Government and the citizens if the records keeping systems are computerized. These benefits are well known and need not detain us here. What is important for us to

note is the fact that the Government recognizes these benefits, and is determined to computerize its records keeping systems. In its publication “A Strategy for Performance Improvement in the Public Service, the Government has stated that:-

“It is in the area of computerization and filing that most needs to be done and where potential returns in improved services are highest..... While recognizing that the initial process of transferring manual files to a computerized system will be an enormous task, it is an essential undertaking if the public service is to provide improved services to an increasing population with a smaller workforce.”

The Government is determined to utilize information technology to improve the management of records for good governance. For example:-

The Government is in the process of developing an integrated financial management information system (IFMIS) that will link the accounts system, the budgetary system, and medium term expenditure framework.

The Government has developed and piloted a computer based personnel information system (Integrated Payroll and Personnel Database) in order to streamline establishment control, payroll administration, and budgeting of personnel emoluments in ministries and departments. This programme is expected to be operational by June 2004.

Activities and services undertaken by the Departments of Immigration, Registrar of Births and Deaths, and the Lands Registry are some of the prime targets for early computerization.

The Government is in the process of developing an **Electronic Transactions Bill, 2003; as well as an Information Communications Technology Policy Paper**. There are critical issues on records management (electronic) in both these documents. It is for these reasons that the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service has been involved in the initial discussions on the formulation of the two documents.

The need for computerization in Kenya has already been articulated. However, the use of information and communication technologies as tools for improved records and information management should never be allowed to undermine the integrity and authenticity of the information itself. All measures must therefore be taken to ensure that the long-term interests of the Kenya Government and its citizens are safeguarded. If this is not done, the citizens’ trust on the public service may crumble down if they discover that vital information is lost or trapped in computer systems for whatever reasons. It is for this reasons that we must take note of the now familiar caution that:-

*“..Electronic media deteriorate, software changes and hardware becomes obsolete. Much valuable data is stored in such environment and is no longer retrievable after a few years. Encryption systems add further complications. Data conversion and migration and transfer to new media must be undertaken, but this is often difficult, costly and unreliable, especially for newer and more complex data formats. Even if a conscientious and continuing effort is made to migrate data, will we really be able to assure, after multiple software and hardware upgrades, that the content, context and structure of the information are still intact? Will the record still be complete, authentic and reliable? This is a problem for all government jurisdictions and for the non-government section as well (e.g. for e-commerce and the legal profession.”)**

A significant amount of records have long term value for individual citizens, and for the Kenya Government. The rights and privileges of citizens are embedded in them. In addition, the relationship between the Government and its citizens is defined in these materials. Furthermore, research interests cannot be met if records with long-term value such as land records and civil registration are not properly safeguarded. In other words, it is the responsibility of the Kenya Government to ensure that the “memory of the nation” is effectively protected and preserved. That is why the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service was established and sustained. There is no way the citizens of a country will continue to bestow its trust to a public service which totally fails to safeguard its records from creation to disposition. In other words, the planned computerization programmes in public offices in Kenya must be done in a systematic and careful manner which protects the integrity and authenticity of records.

Top Government Support

A third solution for the improvement of records keeping in the Public Service is in the form of top Government support. This is completely critical to the success of the whole process. The initiatives described above such as the formation of a Task Force on Records Management and the establishment of a specific Records Cadre (Records Management Officers) could not have taken place in the absence of this top Government support. A recent circular letter issued by the Permanent Secretary, Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of Public Service to Permanent Secretaries is a further testimony to this support. It noted that the issuance of the circular was triggered off by the recent World Bank supported “Video Conference on Evidence Based Governance in the Electronic Age.” Among other things, it stated as follows:-

* Andrew Lipchak, Information Management to Support Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age, a Public Policy Forum Discussion Paper, Toronto, Canada, November, 2002, P.41. The paper is also available at www.ppforum.ca

“Kenyan participants to a recent World Bank supported “Video Conference on Evidence Based Governance in the Electronic Age” have indeed confirmed that we need to take urgent measures to improve records and information management in the Public Service if Kenya is to improve its quality of governance. Furthermore, it is noted that superimposing electronic record-keeping systems on collapsed paper-based systems is not likely to give us successful solutions. In this regard, therefore, you should take the following actions:-

Personally spearhead awareness raising on the adverse effects of poor records and information management, and especially where the situation is acute. Thereafter, develop and implement appropriate solutions.

Ensure that all cases of missing and lost files are promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action taken. It is noted that this particular problem has caused great frustrations to the citizens of this country seeking services in some public offices, thereby reducing their confidence in the Public Service.

Non-current, dormant and valueless records which may be occupying office space and equipment should be destroyed. However, this must be done in accordance with section 7 of the Public Archives and Documentation Service Act, Cap.19, and any other regulations and guidelines. The remaining non-current public records must then be well organized for ease of retrieval.

In this connection, the Directorate of Personnel Management should urgently finalize its assignment on developing strategies for improved records and information management under the on-going Public Service Reform Programme.

CONCLUSION

The Government of the Republic of Kenya recognizes the adverse effects of poor records management. These adverse effects have now been articulated in several policy statements and initiatives. More significantly, the Government is taking measures to improve the situation on a long-term basis. In this regard, it welcomes the support of the World Bank and the donor community in its efforts to improve records and information management for good governance.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A TASK FORCE TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF REGISTRIES IN GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES/DEPARTMENTS

The rationale for the assignment is to enable the government to chart a way forward in management of its records, with a view to not only improve the performance of registries, but also be able to use records as an asset in order to justify the financial rationale of retaining and preserving records. The task force will be expected to:

- ◇ Review the “Proposals for Improvement of Records Management in the Public Service”, presented by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, to the Directorate of Personnel Management.
- ◇ Analyze the records management situation in Government ministries /departments.
- ◇ Analyze the role played by registries in the management of records in the public sector.
- ◇ Review the existing Government records management policies with a view of accommodating ICT and other emerging issues.
- ◇ Establish the constraints that affect the performance of registries, the managerial and administrative support accorded to registries and review its findings with the management of registries in Government ministries/departments.
- ◇ Explore the *IT* market and identify a software for application in the management of records in Government ministries/departments. An integrated software to manage both paper and electronic records and perform records management tasks as opposed to a document management software, would be appropriate.
- ◇ Make recommendations on the infrastructure necessary for performance improvement of registries in the Government ministries/departments.
- ◇ Present a report to the Programme Director, Civil Service Reform Secretariat, with a critical review of the causes of the current situation, and propose practical solutions.
- ◇ Prepare an action plan on how to address all the constraints identified, in order to correct this unsatisfactory situation.

**WORKSHOP ON RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE
ABUJA, NIGERIA**

25th – 26th AUGUST, 2003

GHANA POSITION PAPER

WORLD BANK GOVERNANCE AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT
WORKSHOP AT ABUJA, NIGERIA. -AUGUST 25-26, 2003

A PRESENTATION ON
THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT SITUATION IN GHANA
(THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME, 1992-1999 FUNDED
BY DFID AND THE WORLD BANK AND ITS IMPACT)

INTRODUCTION

I am delighted to be part of this World Bank Regional Workshop on “Governance and Records Management” especially that, it is taking place in this great city of Abuja, Administrative capital of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Giant of Africa.

It is even more gratifying to note that the workshop has to do with the World bank “Support to efforts at promoting improved governance and information management” and that, it involves such an august gathering of key stakeholders including Senior policy makers of your calibre or status.

Experience has shown that no essential record keeping reforms can succeed in any country without the support and involvement of people like you.

I wish to observe also that, the partnership of the International Records Management Trust (IRMT) London, with the World Bank in the design of the agenda for this workshop, no doubt, signals for Nigeria, Benin, Sierra Leone and Kenya, a sound and solid foundation for any initiatives at records keeping reform.

It is my intention to share with you, the experience of Ghana’s Records Management Improvements Programme, thanks to the provision of funds by the Department For International Development (DFID), the World Bank, and the excellent consultancy input by the International Records Management Trust (IRMT), London.

I wish to start by drawing your attention to the relevance of Records Management to the Governance process before I proceed to narrate what the situation in Ghana was before the reform, what it is now, considering the positive and negative aspects of the project, and where the future lies.

2. IMPORTANCE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

When we pause for a moment to think about-the inability of people to receive their pensions after 30 years of work because of lack of records; the inability of persons to locate the title deed to their land; the misplacement of medical records; the deterioration of the public services in many areas due to high prevalence of corruption which in turn is because of no proper public records of expenditure etc, there can be no lingering doubts

about the significance or importance of proper records keeping to our national development.

2.1 RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

2.1.1 The fact is that every government creates and uses records on a daily basis to document actions, confirm decisions, and identify rights as well as responsibilities. Governance objectives such as– the rule of law, accountability, management of state resources, protection of entitlements, services for citizens, foreign relations and international obligations all depend on records

2.1.2 Governments are being asked to be transparent, open, and engaged with their citizens. The citizens are also becoming more concerned about their roles in the governance of the country. They want to be able to trust in their government, and they expect it to function in a manner that allows for mutual trust. Records, and the evidence they contain, are the instruments by which governments can promote a climate of trust and demonstrate an overall commitment to good government.

2.1.3 In developing countries in particular, the efficient management of the public sector has increasingly been seen as a key factor in economic development. But the ability to retrieve information about government services is a central criterion for successful public sector management. When programmes cannot be delivered because of inadequate information systems, the public stands to suffer because, all aspects of the Public Service - health, education, pensions, land and Judicial rights depend on records.

2.1.4 Similarly, accountability is critical to a responsible government. The foundation for accountability is well-managed records. When managed in a way that ensures integrity and authenticity through time, records allow employees to account to their managers. They permit managers to account to the heads of government institutions and they help the heads to account to elected officials and others who represent the interests of society. Without records there can be no accountability framework, and without accountability framework there can be no responsible government.

2.2 TESTIMONIES

2.2.1 On account of all that I have said, it is not surprising that a Ghanaian retired diplomat and a former Minister of Education, Mr. K. B. Asante observed among other things, that, 'the problems of Africa today were not, as most people thought, the frequent coups d'etat but rather the result of bad records keeping' Why did Mr. K.B.Asante say so? Because of the importance of records to the welfare of society at all levels!

2.2.2 Malaysia today is one of the countries that has achieved a great measure of economic prosperity and has become a model of economic progress and development for developing countries including Ghana. It was realised as early as in the 1960's that Records Management in Ministries and Departments should be improved upon to bring

about efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services, ensure probity and accountability as well as eradicate or minimise corruption. That was done hence, the results that Malaysia is reaping today.

- 2.2.3 The situation in Singapore today supports the recognition that Records constitute a great strategic resource and must be managed as such. Just at the time that the RMIP in Ghana began in 1992, there was this Singapore Study report which, my most senior colleagues, I beg to quote here:

"Just as gold, silver and other precious metals are regarded as valuable commodities, so is information today. Now a new force is shaping our lives and is called the Information Age. This is an indication of how relevant records management could be since it contains information capable of altering the way we live, do business, process, store and share information...."(1992 SINGAPORE STUDY)

3. RECORDS MANAGEMENT SITUATION IN GHANA

3.1 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In order to understand better the records management situation as it is today in Ghana, we need to go back in history to the period of the colonial regime.

- 3.1.1 In Ghana as in other Commonwealth Countries, structured record keeping systems were common, operating as part of a small-centralised Civil Service with well-trained and experienced registry staff. Senior Civil Servants understood the importance of records management, having themselves worked in the registries earlier in their careers.
- 3.1.2 However in the years following independence, the situation deteriorated progressively as part of a general decline in public administration. Informal practices were preferred to formal rules and the need for employment overshadowed the need for an efficient administration.
- 3.1.3 Consequently the Civil Service expanded steadily, bringing with it corresponding increased transactions and therefore, the creation of more records. Administrators preferred ad hoc work methods to formal ways of working-such as making decisions without referring to records.
- 3.1.4 There was thus scant incentive to maintain effective record-keeping systems or to allocate adequate resources for records storage and staff. Even in some cases, the lack of effective record systems was motivated by the desire to conceal financial and other irregularities.
- 3.1.5 Eventually, the registries which at first became the point of entry for career development in the Civil Service, were later regarded as a sort of 'Siberia' for staff without career prospects

- 3.1.6 Moreover, the File classification and indexing systems originally designed to meet the record requirement for the colonial period could not meet the needs of complex modern governments.
- 3.1.7 It is even paradoxical that despite the low usage of records, officers were reluctant to destroy records whether they were of value or not. In any case there were no guidelines as to what should be kept and for how long. The end result was that registries became severely congested with older records leading to the collapse of many records systems under their own weight
- 3.1.8 This situation was confirmed when in 1988, three experts -two lecturers from the University of London and the Deputy Keeper of the PRO, London, conducted studies in Records Management systems of 32 commonwealth countries under the auspices of the commonwealth secretariat.
- 3.2 . INITIATIVES/THE IRMT (FORMERLLY ORMT).
- 3.2.1 Following the report from the survey, the then Overseas Records Management Trust (ORMT) of London organised **two International workshops, funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat**, on the management of semi-current records, in 1989 and 1990.
- 3.2.2 The participants sorted and evaluated large quantities of semi-current and non-current records from eight Ministries thereby, sensitising administrators on the need for proper records management to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in public administration.
- 3.2.3 Backlogs of inactive records from eight Ministries were cleared and sent to a model records centre set up in one of the repositories of the National Archives.
- 3.2.4 A follow-up assignment to review Registry organisation and management in the Ghana Civil Service, was undertaken by the IRMT in July/August 1990 under British aid arrangements with the then Overseas Development Administration (ODA), now the Department for International Development (DFID).
- 3.2.5 The review identified a number of serious weaknesses as follows:
- Poor record keeping and registry practices
 - Piles of semi-current and non-current records in expensive filing cabinets and office space
 - Ill-equipped Registry staff in terms of skills
 - Absence of retention schedules
 - The need for an organisation to manage records from creation to disposition.
- 3.3 THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME/PROJECT (RMIP)-BACKGROUND

The lead role of the IRMT was recognised by both the Governments of Ghana and the UK, resulting in the IRMT formal engagement by DFID leading to the Ghana Records Management Improvement Programme (GRMIP) OF 1992 aimed at introducing "a fully comprehensive records service that will cover every aspect and all stages of records creation and keeping"

- 3.3.1 The GOAL was to “improve the quality of information available and enhance the efficiency of information retrieval within the Ghana Civil Service as a means of underpinning all other areas of public sector and economic reform” .
- 3.3.2 The PURPOSE was “to support the establishment of a records system which is accessible, simple to operate, sustainable and cost effective within the context of a viable legal and Organisational framework that will provide a foundation for the eventual introduction of computerization”
- 3.3.3 By November 1992, the IRMT dispatched a consultant, to implement the project And a task Force on Records Management was formed to liaise with the IRMT and the British Council on project activities on behalf of the Ghana Government.
- 3.3.4 DFID provided technical assistance covering consultancy, training and the provision of equipment including shelving of the Records Centre. The International Development Agency (IDA) of the World Bank also provided assistance for the construction of the Records Centre
- 3.3.5 The project was executed in two phases from early 1992 to 31st March 1999.
- 3.4 THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMEE:
ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT.
- 3.4.1 PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM was constituted in place of the task force to be responsible for driving through all work programmes.
- 3.4.2 A RE-STRUCTURING PROGRAMME of registries in the MDAs was put in place to be undertaken by a Re-structuring Team that was formed. Another team was added later.
- 3.4.3 As a basis for cleaning the large backlog of inactive records from ministries and departments, GENERAL RETENTION SCHEDULES covering Administration, Finance, Personnel, Equipment and Supplies, as well as Building and properties, were prepared and over 500 copies printed and distributed to MDAs.
- 3.4.4 NEW LEGISLATIONS to cover all facets of the records cycle were necessary and should be drawn up
- 3.4.5 There was the need for a new ORGANISATION to be created and charged with the responsibility of managing the entire LIFE CYCLE of records

- 3.4.6 To facilitate the professionalisation of the management of records in the Civil Service, a RECORDS CLASS should be established embracing registry staff in the civil service and staff of the department of national to be responsible for the entire records cycle.
- 3.4.7 The need for a new SCHEME OF SERVICE, defining conditions governing entry to the class, the training facilities and progression within the class, was drawn up.
- 3.4.8 An INTERMEDIATE RECORDS CENTRE should be set up with the government of Ghana contributing to support funding from the World Bank for its construction.
- 3.4.9 An EXTENSIVE TRAINING PROGRAMME targeted to meet the needs of a range of different groups in records management should be embarked upon.
- 3.5 THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME:
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT.

All the elements listed above were implemented accordingly and there are tangible physical evidences on the ground that constitute the POSITIVE ASPECTS of the project:

- 3.5.1 *The two Records Office Re-structuring Teams formed in 1992 have restructured and installed the new keyword system in registries of 19 ministries. There is thus faster and more accurate retrieval of files than before. Therefore, informal policy decision-making is effected without much delay.*
- 3.5.2 *With the end of the records project members of the team have been re-deployed to head records offices to ensure the sustainability of the enhancements made whilst still being available to be called on to lead or participate in future restructuring exercises.*
- 3.5.3 *Legislative Instrument, No. 1628 was promulgated in September 1996 establishing the department to be known as the PUBLIC RECORDS AND ARCHIVES ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT (PRAAD). The Head of Civil Service issued circular No: 78/97 of 12/1197 announcing the creation of the new department.*
- 3.5.4 *The Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 1997, No. 535, was also passed by parliament on August 1st 1997 and assented to by the President on August 29th 1997. This redefined the functions and operations of PRAAD to manage public records through out their life cycle.*
- 3.5.5 *There are about 515 records class staff working in the various records offices to ensure the proper creation, storage and use of records, and 139 staff at PRAAD head quarters and seven regional offices.*
- 3.5.6 *There is a new Scheme of Service for the records class - defining conditions governing entry to the class, the training facilities and progression within the class.*
- 3.5.7 *There is a fully **FUNCTIONAL RECORDS CENTRE** in place:*

- *The construction of the Centre began in 1994, and was completed and occupied early in 1996 and commissioned by the President on April 8th 1998. It has a capacity to hold over 80,000 boxes and is fully operational with over 120 clientele whose records in custody total about 38,000 boxes. This represents over 5,135 4-drawer Metal Filing cabinets freed in MDAs for re-use- and savings to Government of over 9,505,126,808.00 Ghanaian Cedis (1,056,125.US dollars).*
- The MDAs have the assurance that their semi and non-current records are better managed, secured and can easily be accessed. This situation was not possible when the records were with them. The records office staff with training in decongestion exercises and the use of the Records Centre, have better understanding in transferring their records to the Centre. They therefore own the decongestion exercise.
- The Centre takes an average of 3 - 30 minutes to produce and deliver records requested through our records courier delivery system.
- The opportunity that the Centre offers depositors to have easy access to their records for reference has ensured speedy and quality decision making process in government either to confirm, plan and implement policies, or protect the citizenry rights and as evidence of accountability.

3.5.8 *The **TRAINING** aspect of the project has yielded positive results:*

- Training has been taking place through workshops, during the restructuring exercise, and awareness sessions. In all these more than 1,200 Civil Servants have benefited from training in records management within the Ghana Civil Service.
- Twenty-six members of PRAAD staff have undertaken professional level training in the UK.
- PRAAD staff also benefited from study visits to the Gambia and Tanzania where similar projects have been or are being implemented.

3.5.9 There are also **TRAINING MANUALS** on all aspects of PRAAD work such as:

- Records office procedures manual (Restructured Records offices)
- Omnibus Retention Schedules for the Disposition of Public Records
- Records Office Restructuring Guide
- Records Centre procedures manual
- Procedures manual for un-restructured records offices
- Desk instructions for un-restructured Records Offices
- Desk instructions for Action Officers
- Training of Trainers Guide
- Archives Procedures Manual
- Records Disposition Guide

3.5.10 **Regional Restructuring Teams** have been established in all the regions and training provided for five of them at Ashanti, Eastern, Northern, Brong-Ahafo and the Volta Region.

3.6 LESSONS FROM THE RMIP

*The experience of the RMIP in Ghana so far, teaches us that Government records should be managed as a **strategic resource** as valuable as our cocoa, gold and diamond.*

3.6.1 *The clearing of ministries of vast backlog of closed files has freed valuable office and storage space thereby saving government costs that would have been spent in the expansion of accommodation and storage equipment. At the time of the RMIP it was estimated that about c20 million cedis (over \$5000) savings was made every year from the liberation of office space, file cabinets and other storage equipment in the Ministries alone.*

3.6.2 *By establishing and maintaining high professional standards at each phase of the management of records life cycle, the widespread breakdown of record keeping systems in the past is being rectified so that every aspect of the Public and Economic Sectors' reforms to which Government is committed, can be sustained.*

3.6.3 *MDAs whose registries have been purged of their semi current and concurrent records have faster and more accurate retrieval of files than before. Therefore, informal policy decision-making is effected without much delay.*

3.6.4 *The Records Centre, apart from providing physical security for the records in custody, has through its effective and efficient operation, won the confidence of MDAS whose records are in custody*

3.6.5 *The Records Management Improvement Programme has exposed the staff of the former National Archives to new skills and a new confidence for tackling severe records problems.*

3.6.6 *There is also regular flow now, of records of permanent value into the repositories of the archives than before, thus enriching the archives.*

3.6.7 *Ministries and departments are beginning to cultivate a new sense of awareness that it is their responsibility to maintain a good records management system as enshrined in the law with PRAAD having an inspectorial and advisory role.*

4. **ELECTRONIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

4.1 BACKGROUND

4.1.1 *Following Ghana's participation in an Electronic Records and Good Governance seminar in Kenya (March 1996), significant steps were take in the management of*

Electronic Records. An assessment of capacity to manage Electronic Records was carried out by the IRMT consultant in selected departments including Ministry of Finance and OHCS in September 1988 revealing, a very gloomy picture:

- There are no proper backup procedures
- No Government policies on the creation, capture, maintenance, use and disposition of such records.
- No data protection Laws, standard computer structures
- Lack of disaster recovery plans for files stored on our PCs;
- Inconsistency in back up procedures;
- Non-existence or inconsistent security procedures for access to computerised information especially on stand alone PCs;
- Lack of adequate training for both junior and senior management staff on electronic record issues; and
- Belief that computerised versions of records are not records.

4.1.2 Following from these revelations a round table conference was organised - bringing together stakeholders representing a wide variety of perspectives to discuss issues on electronic records within the Government of Ghana (January 1999.)

4.1.3 A co-ordinating body was formed to deal with electronic records management issues.

4.1.4 A policy document on Electronic Records Management was been developed the -key provisions of which were:

- to make and keep records that fully and accurately document their operations and ensure accountability; and
- to establish and maintain government-wide records management programme to be managed in conformity with standards and codes of best practice formulated by PRAAD.

4.1.5 On the 29th of October 1999 at Miklin hotel, Accra, a workshop of fifty participants drawn from the civil service and other public sector organisations was organised to validate the policy.

4.2 ELECTRONIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT SUPPORT BY EU

4.2.1 Under the GOG/EU Matrix of Measures for the strengthening and improvement of modalities of public finance management, one of the main activities highlighted for implementation was the establishment of a records management system. After consultations with key stakeholders and the Delegation of the EC, it was agreed that assistance should be extended to PRAAD to enable it establish and install new records management systems in the Ministry of Finance (MOF), Ministry of Education (MOE), Controller & Accountant General's Department (CAGD) and the Auditor General's Department/Ghana Audit Service (GAS).

4.2.2 An essential component of the project has to do with the establishment of electronic records management system of which the terms of reference were:

- Conduct baseline surveys to determine the current physical and organizational capacity in PRAAD and the 4 MDAs to manage electronic records. This will include an analysis of availability and use of Computers by Action Officers, the type and quantity of electronic documentation, current management arrangements, policies, procedures and practices.
- Facilitate discussions with Senior Staff in each of the selected Institutions and PRAAD to establish desired organizational and national standards for the management of electronic records.
- In the light of the above analysis, conduct Training Needs Assessments within the selected Institutions in order to establish individual staff capacity to manage electronic records to desired organizational and national standards.
- Develop a curriculum for an Electronic Records Management training programme for the Ghana Civil Service covering all aspects of the management of electronic information.
- Prepare training materials and other guidance manuals on Electronics Records Management in support of the developed curriculum.
- Empower PRAAD staff to deliver the curriculum.
- Develop standardized file directory structures for electronic documents to enable the introduction of Electronic Records Management Systems in PRAAD and 4 MDAs.

4.2.3 The consultants for this aspect of the EU project are K2-TECHTOP CONSULT OF (PVT) LTD

4.2.4 A situation analysis, including an electronic records survey has been done and the results will be used to design the system for the management and handling of electronic records. Depending on the findings, the system design is likely to include the following:

- Electronic File Classification System
- Procedures for creating and electronically filing documents
- Transfer of documents from current folders to new filing system
- Document naming conventions
- Versions controls
- Procedures for authentication and verification
- Deletion and update
- Back up
- Management of e-mails and Internet downloads
- Appraisal to determine short and long term value
- Diskette/CD ROM management systems

- Archiving of valuable electronic records

5 SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT

5.1 PRAAD CAPABILITIES

5.1.1 The president of Ghana on the occasion of the commissioning of the National Records Centre on the 8th of April 1998, allude to the need for sustainability when he said: "The investment we have made in this facility is enormous, and therefore we need to take proper care of it. This is an important responsibility, which the Department must bear, in order to sustain the interest **of clients. Not only should they** be concerned with the scheduled maintenance of the infrastructure, so as to keep the records always in good condition but also, they should promote and sustain such standards of service that will encourage their clients or visitors to use these facilities. Naturally, the essence of such service delivery would be the timely release of the relevant records or data. We will be interested to see how they perform."

5.1.2 It is clear from this that the challenge of sustaining the records management project had to be met by PRAAD as a matter of great concern to the nation hence the need to assess PRAAD's capabilities.

5.1.3 A joint final review of the Ghana project, by PRAAD and the IRMT, in April 1999 noted the following as the strengths of the PRAAD:

- management structure in place -see organogram as appendix (iii)
- a supportive environment
- support of the Head of the Civil Service
- enthusiasm of senior staff
- enabling legislation
- regular and systematic flow of material and accruals into the National Archives for the first time in 20 years.
- fully functioning Records Centre
- Higher profile of the department and staff.
- Enhanced scheme of service
- mechanisms for staff to opt to join the Records Class
- a range of manuals and supporting documentation

5.1.4 The WEAKNESSES were identified as:

- insufficient staff and too many vacancies
- limited expertise and capacity, especially in the regions
- lack of resources to sustain advances, especially in the regions
- National Archives Division not fully on board and no significant enhancement of services.

- lack of capacity of National Archives Division to describe and make available material passed to its care

5.1.5 The OPPORTUNITIES were identified as:

- Good will from the Head of the Civil Service
- Possibility to raise image further and to seek increased budget
- Staff have greater opportunities for promotion in the records class
- A solid basis on which to build out into the regions
- The possibility to generate funds or pursue more realistic cost recovery

5.1.6 The THREATS were:

- Fear of change and a resistance to new objectives is still evident among a small minority of staff
- Insufficient funds and resources in present budget provisions
- Uncertainty of support to sustain the improvements
- The Project may be seen as donor driven and thus the Government of Ghana may not fully take it over.
- A lack of public awareness of the role of PRAAD.

5.2 PRACTICAL STEPS TAKEN BY PRAAD

5.2.1 RESTRUCTURED MDAs

- All restructured records offices of ministries are headed by trained staff most of them former members of the restructuring team.
- Desk instructions for Action officers have been distributed to the Management staff of such MDAs.
- Refresher training programmes are regularly organised for the records class staff in such ministries.
- A review section has been set up and conducts regular reviews of the restructured records offices in relation to staffing, statistics of files created, incoming correspondence, outgoing correspondence etc, accommodation evaluation, storage equipment evaluation, stationery supply evaluation and procedure evaluation.

5.2.2 UNRESTRUCTURED MDAs

- (i) Unrestructured Desk Instructions have been distributed to selected MDAs including RCCs.
- (ii) Training organised for selected records class staff to decongest their respective MDAs under supervision.

5.2.3 UNRESTRUCTURED MDAs

Restructuring teams have been established in all the Regions. Some manuals have been sent to these regions for their self-study and instruction while awaiting further assistance from PRAAD. Restructuring teams of the Upper East, West and Northern Regions as well as Brong-Ahafo regions and Volta have been trained.

5.3 THE RECORDS CENTRE

- 5.3.1 The centre enjoys the much needed management support in the performance of its activities. The support includes the provision of resources, and a clear understanding of the problems confronted at the centre. This invariably has made the staff dedicated/committed to work.
- 5.3.2 The International Records Management Trust gave an invaluable technical assistance in terms of both management and professional training to the staff of the centre. The training programmes received so far have sharpened their skills and they are confident in the performance of their duties.
- 5.3.3 The National Records Centre now enjoys over 130 clientele depositing records offices of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and many more are bringing their records. This situation has arisen because the MDAs have the assurance that their semi and non-current records are better managed, secured and can easily be accessed-a situation which was not possible when the records were with them.
- 5.3.4 The records office staff with training in decongestion exercises and the use of the Records Centre, have better understanding in transferring their records to the centre. They therefore own the decongestion exercise
- 5.3.5 The centre takes an average of 3 - 30 minutes to produce and deliver records requested through our records courier delivery system.
- 5.3.6 The opportunity that the centre offers depositors to have easy access to their records for reference has ensured speedy and quality decision making process in government either to confirm, plan and implement policies, or protect the citizenry rights and as evidence of accountability.
- 5.3.7 The centre co-ordinates an effective records disposition programme, which is transparent and guided by the Omnibus Schedule for the Retention and Disposition of Public Records, issued in June 1996. Each year, records of value to the country's heritage are transferred to the National Archives to enrich the historical sources available in the Archives for research and reference purposes.

5.4 BUDGETARY CONSTRAINT

- 5.4.1 In all third world economies there is always a higher demand for resources and funds than the supply of such funds. This is because the economies still lack certain basic necessities such as good health care, education, roads and even good food for it's

inhabitants and a lot more. In such situations one would straight away see reasons why such economies would not be able to meet all the needs of MDAs. Therefore only governments of high vision would put high premium on improved records management programmes.

5.4.2 Ghana government funding to PRAAD is very meagre. It was even worse when the department was then called the National Archives. At that time, most people saw here, as a mortuary for records and so there was no need to waste limited resources to dead things.

5.4.3 If one takes the funds made available by Government of Ghana to PRAAD for the past seven years for example,(1993-1999), it adds up to about ₵3.8 billion cedis. This includes the salaries of the staff as well. Within the same span of time, during the RMIP, the amount spent was 1,547,255.00 pounds sterling. In 1999 this was equivalent to ₵9.28 billion cedis. This is almost three fold the amount of money released by the Ghana government to PRAAD.

5.4.4 Nevertheless, on account of the external funding provided for the project, Government has been convinced to increase our budget over the years. The current budget in operation amounts to two billion three hundred thousand cedis (₵2,300,000,000) the equivalent of about £200,000. There is always the need to lobby for an increase in the budget and use it judiciously in the interest of the department.

5.5 IN-SERVICE TRAINING-This is an area necessary to strengthen our sustainability efforts. There are obvious advantages:

- Ability to tailor it to the specific needs of recipient's environment in terms of content, duration practicality, and interaction.
- Relatively inexpensive to equip local professionals to transfer skills and knowledge to colleagues as has been the case in computer literacy Programme at the Editorial Office.

5.6 CLOSE ALLIANCE WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS in the information industry, especially the institutions of higher learning and association of records and archives professionals and practitioners can help in making valuable expertise and other infrastructure available.

5.6.1 It also serves as an important bulwark against unnecessary political interference and can also serve as an independent pressure group to champion the interests of the profession.

5.7 MAINTENANCE CULTURE-the cornerstone of any sustainability initiative. This applies in four areas namely:

- Apart from the obvious need to take good care of equipment and prompt replacement of defective parts, there is the need to improvise imported material and consumables through the use of local substitutes, recycling etc.

- Cost saving in terms of misuse of utilities like water, electricity, telephones will go a long way to reduce expenditure and at the same time make funds available for other needs.
- Records and archives systems installed should not be allowed to degenerate due to inertia. For example keyword, classification systems, retention schedules and even entire systems require periodic and scheduled review and updating. An on-going system of evaluation, monitoring and review will ensure that remedial action is taken before the entire system collapses to warrant massive external support.
- The importance of up to date information in all aspects of the profession cannot be over emphasised. A professional who depends on outdated concepts, technologies, practices, standards, procedures becomes counter productive and in the long run sub-consciously contributes to the collapse of the RMIP.

5.8 MANAGEMENT/STAFF RELATIONSHIP

- The type of relationship that exists between management and the staff can be a factor in the smooth administration of the department as well as an incentive or disincentive for the staff to give of their best in the delivery of their services. There is therefore the need for:
- When improvements and changes are made with the full involvement and commitment of key holders and key players then the changes and improvements are more likely to be sustainable.
- There should not be intimidation of the staff by management on account of personal problems, at work - denial of promotion etc.
- Administrative efficiency and justice will provide for a congenial work environment where motivation love of work initiative team spirit will thrive. If you are in doubt about the importance of this factor the pause a bit and consider the negative effects of favouritism nepotism backbiting rumour-mongering apathy to mention a few.
- Personal time management is a crucial factor worthy of consideration. Until we all reach the point where 24 hour will not be adequate both for our workload and domestic duties and responsibilities there will always be inefficiency and therefore needing external help.

5.9 Apart from funds, there is always the need to demonstrate a **HIGH SENSE OF PATRIOTISM** on our part as Records Managers, knowing that by the effective and efficient performance of our role, we can transform the poor economies of our developing countries, into viable and prosperous ones.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 I wish to conclude by referring to one of the resolutions of the **GLOBAL FORUM ON EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE** that took place in South Africa last year and was attended by fifty-six (56) national archivists and archival educators from Commonwealth countries around the world Nigeria, Kenya and Sierra Leone

were represented by their National Archivists who made very significant and relevant contributions, and were part of the resolutions.

6.2 Resolution 1(a) urged that, “any government project and/or initiative should include records and information management requirements as a key component of the planning and implementation process to support accountability, transparency, good governance and poverty alleviation”

6.3 THIS WORKSHOP IS INDEED TIMELY, RELEVANT AND MOST WELCOME

THANK YOU!

Note of a Project Review Meeting

25 November 2003

Note of a Project Review Meeting:
Evidence Based Governance in the Electronic Age
25 November 2003, J-Building

Present:

Mike Stevens
Gary Reid
Ranjana Mukherjee
Brighton Musungwa
Guy Darlan
Anne Thurston

The purpose of the meeting was to review progress on the project and to agree the next steps involved. Gary Reid will be taking over as Task Manager in December.

Anne Thurston summarised the progress to date. Thirteen case studies have been completed; a global consultative forum involving face-to-face meetings, video conferences and electronic discussions has been delivered. The results have been incorporated in a Records Management Capacity Framework. The Framework will make it possible to analyse capacity in relation to core requirements and to capacity building material.

Anne has recently held an extensive round of consultations with in the Bank. This included discussions with Bill Dorotinsky, Nicola Smithers, Praveen Kumar, Subash Bhatnagar, Deepak Bhatia, Sahr Kpundeh, Bob Beschel, Tony Hegarty, Brian Falconer, Brighton Musungwa, Joel Trukewitz, Bruno Laporte, Guy Darlan and Ronald MacLean-Abaroa. She will also be talking to Jitt Gill, Gunther Hyderall and Harry Garnett.

A number of key issues emerged from these consultations. These are:

- There is wide agreement on the importance of records management for development and a need for a clear strategy for moving forward.
- Field tests are needed to demonstrate the value of the Records Management Capacity Framework and to ensure that it has been fully harmonised in relation to real needs. Ethiopia, Kenya and Mauritius have been recommended.
- There would be value in including records management as a HIPIC indicator.

- There is a need to define the functional requirements for records management as part of IT systems requirements. These should be defined in each functional area. This would fit well with the work of the e-development thematic group, which includes representatives of PREM, GITC, WBI and ISG.
- The capacity building value needs to be communicated to the regional enhancement teams.

Mike Stevens noted that there are three groups of Bank staff who need to be involved in and aware of the project: those working on public sector management, financial management and procurement reforms. They are not yet including records management in country programmes. Mike felt that there should make the products of the project available to them so that they can build it into reform strategies.

It was agreed that a brown bag lunch would be valuable, but it was felt that this would be most effective after a series of field tests of the Records Management Capacity System that the project is developing. The Framework will make it possible to assess the capacity to manage records in relation to reform initiatives for three functions: financial and procurement, human resource management and management of the courts. The tool would then be presented as a toolkit to help diagnose and plan programmes. The brown bag lunch would present the findings of the field tests and how they can be integrated into World Bank programmes.

This should not be presented as pilot testing: we want to get an analysis and recommendations that will support action – that is the way to present it to Navi.

Phase Two would be a roll out with WBI. There needs to be a more detailed description of what needs to be done.

Brighton Msungwa noted that records management is a crosscutting initiative that had already been identified by the CFAA Ethiopia team.

Ethiopia is a pilot country for harmonisation. The government is serious about reforms and has identified the need to work with the international community. The Bank and the entire donor community are very active. The records management field test should be linked to the wider reform programmes, including the capacity-building programme for decentralisation. There is a harmonise this activity with the various donor initiatives. Several donors are helping with multiple projects.

The CFAA team came up with records as an issue in the CFAA; Navin Grishankar has identified the need. As yet, there is no clarity about what needs to be done, but there is recognition that this area needs more attention. The problem has been recognised, but there is a need to have more information and to give it careful analysis. The project should be linked to budget reform and accounting at the national and regional levels. Fiduciary compliance is a problem. It would be valuable to chose two progressive provinces to be the focus of the pilot.

Is there donor financing that could take this and run with it? The donor community should be very receptive to taking this on.

WBI has been asked to link to e-government, but this is too broad.

The Ministry of Capacity Building is responsible for the Civil Service Reform Programme.

The test should lead to specific results.

Kenya would be aimed at getting some quick wins for the Kenya Government. The human resource area is important. The wage bill is unaffordable. Kenya, the records systems are well developed, but there is a lack of discipline. Ethiopia is the opposite: records are not well developed, but they are more disciplined.

Kenya is embarking on the next wave of public sector reform. This is the right time to include records management. A new CAS is being prepared.

Brighton is interested in human resource management capacity and can tie this in. Staffing requirements come up in the CFAA.

There should be a glossy publication announcing the tool, setting it in the big picture – a PREM publication of about 20 to 25 pages.

Note of a Project Review Meeting

26 February 2004

Note of a Project Review Meeting:
Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age
26 February 2004, MC 5 meeting room

Present:

World Bank:

Gary Reid
Bill Dorotinsky
Junghun Cho
Jitt Gill
Ranjana Mukherjee
Andres McAlister

International Records Management Trust:

Anne Thurston
Sue Bryant
Sarah Demb

The purpose of the meeting was to review the development of the Records Management Capacity Assessment System software, to consider how it could be strengthened and to consider how it could contribute to operational work.

Over the last several decades, records systems have decayed into informality, and frequently the evidence of decisions or transactions that is needed for planning, implementing, reporting and auditing is not available. This is a crosscutting issue with a significant impact on governments' ability to deliver reform in many areas, for instance wage control, budgeting and court case management.

The problem is well known in developing countries, but it has not previously been addressed systematically. Until recently, it was assumed by many that computerisation would solve the problems. It is now rapidly becoming evident that computerisation makes it harder, not easier, to capture and preserve records as reliable evidence. In the rapidly transforming electronic environment, records are increasingly complex, fragile and difficult to manage; the dearth of skills in the critical area of electronic records management places governments at considerable risk.

RMCAS has been developed as an objective means of evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of records systems and the means of strengthening the infrastructure required to manage records.

The software and content development been funded by the Governance Knowledge Sharing Program, but the tool draws on assessment questions, case studies and extensive consultations (through e-discussions, video conferences and face-to-face meetings) that were funded by the Development Grant Facility.

The tool has a number of strengths:

- It can be applied specifically to records supporting several core functions and processes: financial/procurement, human resource/payroll, legal/judicial. There is a potential for creating links to agreed indicators, such as the HIPC or the Public Finance Management Performance Measurement Framework Indicators.
- Questions have been developed for stakeholders with different levels of responsibility. Questions can be asked a high level, and it is possible to drill down for detail. Stakeholder responses can be compared, and different types of reports can be generated.
- The tool is mapped against international standards for records and information management and therefore provides an objective measure of good practice that can be widely accepted. This includes the ISO Standard on Records Management (15489), the Canadian Information Management Capacity Check and the European Model Requirements on Managing Electronic records.
- The tool is not prescriptive: governments can determine their areas of strengths and weakness and to take the lead on setting their own pace and staged pathways for reform.
- The tool is not linked to any particular resource environment or administrative tradition.
- It is scalable and can be used in relation to larger or small organisations, whole sectors or whole governments. It facilitates comparisons within or across governments.
- It can be used to monitor changes over time.
- It addresses the issues and competencies involved in managing paper and electronic records and in hybrid environments.
- It provides an electronic link between issues identified in the capacity assessment and a database of capacity building tools (strategic planning tools, guidance materials and training modules, etc). The materials can be updated and expanded over time, particularly as the technology climate changes.
- It provides a means of linking operational requirements to capacity building.

The World Bank personnel participating in the meeting did not doubt that records management is a significant issue for development, but they raised three key issues about the tool:

- Jitt Gill noted that the number of different stakeholders covered by the assessment should be reduced. In a number of cases, the stakeholders could be combined. He felt that it should be possible to develop a simple standard approach to assessing records management as a foundation for operations work.
- It was generally agreed that the overall number of questions should be reduced.
- Bill Dorotinsky and others felt that the emphasis should be more on records and information systems and less on sector processes. The Trust team agreed that the questions could be re-worded to change the emphasis. Nevertheless, it is important to keep the link between records and the sector they support so the records capture and preserve the information required to support a given function.

It was agreed that RMCAS would be presented at a Brown Bag lunch and that a PREM Note would be prepared.

Anne Thurston
February 2004

Presentation to a SADC Regional Consultation on
E-Government Readiness by University of Botswana Lecturers
Gaborone, Botswana, April 2004

**E-GOVERNANCE: THE NEED FOR E-RECORDS
READINESS ASSESSMENT TOOL**

By

**Nathan Mnjama PhD
and
Justus Wamukoya PhD**

**Department of Library and Information Studies, University
of Botswana**

INTRODUCTION

- Good governance based on transparency, accountability and trust is a common goal among governments.
- However, good governance is predicated on the availability of complete, accurate, reliable and timely records.
- Good record keeping therefore underpins good governance.
- This means that the governance process must include deliberate steps to identify key issues that impact on information management generally and record keeping in particular.
- This is particularly important since the value of official government records derives from information they contain and the evidence they provide.
- Official government records document past decisions and actions, as well as establish and protect the rights and responsibilities of both the government and citizens.
- Without access to good records, officials are compelled to take decisions on an ad-hoc basis without the benefit of institutional memory.
- Lack of good records management is directly linked to the persistence of corruption and fraud.
- Many governments have found it difficult to carry out meaningful audits as a result of poor record keeping.
- Without reliable records, governments cannot manage state resources, its revenue or civil service.

WHY WE NEED TO TAKE AN INTEREST IN MANAGING E-RECORDS

- The nature and form of governance is changing as a result of many factors, most notably, the rise of new technologies and their growing incorporation into corporate business environments, public as well as private.
- Good record keeping underpins good governance, especially in an increasingly information and technology-intensive environment in which ICT's have a major impact on the availability, processing, storage, distribution and security of information.
- The need to evolve a new learning culture and strong infrastructure of laws, policies, standards, practices, systems and people to support information and records management in both traditional and e-governance environments.

- The creation, use and preservation of electronic records pose special challenges requiring new techniques, skills, competencies and tools.
- New technologies provide great potential for improving efficiency and provision of services.
- E-governance and e-commerce require accurate, relevant, authoritative, complete, authentic and timely data and information.
- Records as the evidence base upon which governments and citizens depend must continue to be protected and preserved.

ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF E-RECORDS:

(a). Comprehensivity

- Why was the record created
- Who created, received and kept the record?
- What functions did it serve?
- What procedures, methods, and processes were used to create, send and maintain the record?

Authenticity

- Provide an audit trail showing what was sent, to who, who saw it, received it, deleted or amended it .

(c) Fixity:

- Electronic records should be tamper proof.
- Once a transaction has occurred, no alteration should be made to the record.

SHORTCOMINGS IN MANAGING E-RECORDS

- Absence of organizational plans for managing e-records.
- Low awareness of the role of records management in organizations

- Lack of stewardship and co-ordination in handling paper-based as well as e-records.
- Absence of legislation, organizational policies and procedures to guide the management of both paper and electronic records.
- Absence of core competencies in records and archives management.
- Lack of appropriate facilities and environmental conditions for the storage and preservation of paper as well as electronic records.
- Absence of dedicated budgets for records management.
- Poor security and confidentiality controls.

Lack of records retention and disposal policies.

- Absence of migration strategies for e-records.
- Absence of vital records and disaster preparedness and recovery plans.

E-RECORDS READINESS CHECKLIST.

The tool addresses the following issues:

- Awareness and Ownership
- ICT – Records Management integration
- Laws, Policies, and Procedures
- Resources and Training
- Records Management Program Management

USING THE E-READINESS CHECKLIST

The e-records readiness tool is intended to provide a benchmark for organizations to assess themselves and to determine where they stand relative to the above issues. Below is an example of the different levels organizations could use to determine their e-records readiness.

Establishing Levels of Awareness and ownership

(Example drawn from completing Question 1-16)

Level 1:

Senior management have no understanding of and commitment to the management of the organization's records.

Level 2:

Senior management have a broad understanding of and recognize the need to embrace and support records management in the organization.

Level 3:

Senior management are highly committed to and are supportive of records management programmes in the organization.

Level 4:

Senior management have created an environment whereby records management is highly valued as part of the organization's overall information management strategy.

Level 5:

The organization is recognized for its stewardship and leadership role in implementing records management programmes.

Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age:
Terms of Reference for an Independent Evaluation

Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age

Terms of Reference for An Independent Evaluation

BACKGROUND

Introduction

Across the broad array of governance issues, the management of public sector records as evidence of policies, actions, transactions and entitlement has significant implications for how governments formulate programmes, manage budgets and deliver services. This area has not always been recognised in the past, but if not addressed, it can result in a loss of institutional memory that undermines virtually all other areas of reform. The result is that governments are not able to monitor, track or evaluate their performance and commitments, and citizens cannot claim entitlements or hold their governments accountable. Access to information through freedom of information laws becomes meaningless, and the rule of law cannot be applied consistently.

This area of work has not been articulated previously, but it is beginning to be recognised as a fundamental aspect of reform strategies. The rapid transition to the electronic environment has opened new opportunities for monitoring, aggregating and sharing information. However, this raises a host of new accountability issues. Electronic records are not always accepted as legally admissible, but even when they are, there are a host of issues that must be addressed if the records are to remain authentic, reliable and legally verifiable over time. Most often, electronic records need to be managed in relation to paper records in a hybrid environment. The requirements for addressing these issues in relation to public sector reform initiatives have not yet been defined, and as a result, funds are wasted in introducing programmes that lack a solid evidence base and governments and citizens thus are left in a vulnerable position.

The Evidence Based Governance Project

DGF provided core funding for an umbrella programme, Forging Partnership for Good Governance in Public Expenditure and Records Management, of which PEFA is the primary part. The records management component, entitled Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age, was contracted to the International Records Management Trust as a specialist organisation and is task managed within the World Bank by the Africa Region. A separate independent evaluation of the Evidence Based-Governance Project has been arranged by the International Records Management Trust under the terms of the grant agreement.

The Evidence-Based Governance Project involves building global awareness and capacity to manage records (paper and electronic) as evidence of policies, actions, transactions and entitlements in relation to core government functions and governance objectives. It seeks to provide a means of benchmarking capacity against international good practice standards (as

performance indicators), without being prescriptive, and of building capacity and ownership of solutions in relation to widely differing contexts.

It complements the PEFA program objectives by addressing the management of records underpinning public expenditure and financial accountability. It also addresses the related issue of the management of records underpinning human resource management. In addition, it is concerned with legal and judicial records, which underpin the rule of law. There is strong collaboration between the PEFA program and the Evidence-Based Governance project. The Trust provides regular reports of progress to the PEFA Steering Committee.

The principal partners in the project are the World Bank and the International Records Management Trust, working with the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Commonwealth Secretariat, with inputs from the Government of Canada and Malaysia and the Swedish International Development Agency. A total of thirty six seven other countries contributed staff time to the project.

The aim is to:

- reduce the risks to countries of working without reliable and authentic evidence
- assist countries to assess their own needs and set their own priorities in this area by providing tools that are scaleable to different resource environments, scales of administration and cultural heritages
- provide methodologies for problem solving that can be shared and thus reduce costs
- provide a means of harmonising donor reforms in the area of records management
- enhance the impact of reforms
- mainstream the approaches developed, within the World Bank and other partners.

Evidence-Based Governance Project Activities

The Evidence-Based Governance Project has involved three core activities aimed as delivering its objectives. These activities have involved:

- conducting studies, both within the World Bank and in client countries of the issues involved in managing records as evidence in the three core functions studied: financial management, human resource management and court management; producing 13 case studies based on findings in client countries
- developing and delivering a global discussion forum involving: face to face meetings for senior records professionals representing 37 client countries; four electronic discussions for records creators and records professionals; eight regional video conferences for senior government

- developing and testing a Records Management Capacity Framework, linked to the International Standard on Records Management, for assessing and developing records management capacity in relation to development objectives for financial, human resource and court management.

SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation of the project is a requirement of the DGF grant. The purpose of the evaluation is to enhance development impact by articulating lessons learned; to provide information to the funding organisations; and to provide external validation for accountability purposes. It is also intended to provide an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the implementation arrangements for the project and to determine lessons learned that could be helpful in designing future partnerships.

The evaluator(s) will examine the projects outputs. In particular, copies will be provided of:

- annual project reports and reports on specific project elements
- video tapes of live conference sessions broadcast from World Bank Washington studio to a face-to-face meeting in South Africa and to countries in the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific regions
- transcripts of four electronic discussions with records creators, users and managers on the significance of records for good governance, electronic government, accountability and transparency and access to information and on capacity building requirements
- 13 case studies of records management in relation to financial, human resource and court management in client countries
- a country financial accountability assessment for Ethiopia including action for records management improvement
- the Records Management Capacity Framework (assessment and capacity building tool)
- interviews with donors and project participants.

DIMENSIONS TO BE EVALUATED

The evaluation will involve two key steps:

- assessing the Evidence-Based Governance Project against the seven dimensions described below

- identifying recommendations for strengthening the sustainability and impact of the Evidence-Based Governance Project, the future focus of work in this area and lessons to be drawn for implementation of future partnerships.

The evaluation will address the following seven dimensions:

- *relevance*: the consistency of the project with overall development and/or research strategy and with policy priorities of principal stakeholders. The project's comparative advantage compared to other organisations
- *effectiveness*: the extent to which the project achieved the objectives articulated at approval; the extent to which the project has made a difference
- *efficiency*: the extent to which the project benefits are commensurate with the inputs (cost and time of implementation)
- *sustainability*: the likelihood that the benefits and results of the projects will be sustained over time
- *institutional development impact*: the extent to which the project contributed to improvements in norms or practices that will enable beneficiaries to effectively use available human, financial and natural resources
- *process and implementation*: the extent to which the project worked well as planned, or, if not, what barriers were encountered and how they were surmounted.

In responding to these core evaluation questions, the evaluator(s) should take into account several core issues:

- the degree of ownership of the project objectives by records professionals and creators and users of records in participating countries
- the appropriateness of project methodology as a means of change management in the context of the transition to electronic governance
- the quality of the Records Management Capacity Framework.

REPORTING

The evaluation report should contain the following sections:

- specific description of program objectives, deliverable, activities and units being evaluated
- methodology used to develop findings.
- responses to each of the seven core evaluation questions.
- summary of key findings

- conclusions and lessons learned
- recommendations.

The evaluator(s) will report the findings and recommendations to representatives of the funding organisations copied to PEFA Steering Committee, the Task Manager and the International Records Management Trust in a report not to exceed 20 pages excluding appendices.

EXPERTISE REQUIRED

It is anticipated that one lead consultant will be required, possibly working with a second person. The following experience and expertise will be required:

- extensive experience of the principles and practice of records and information management
- knowledge of the International Records Management Standard (ISO 15489) and its application
- knowledge of the state of records and information internationally, particularly in relation to global development objectives
- knowledge of governance and institutional development.

TIMEFRAME AND WORKPLAN

It is estimated that a total of 10 person days will be required for the evaluation, including reviewing project objectives, activities and outputs and report preparations.

The approximate calendar is as follows:

November 26, 2003	agree terms of reference with Task Manager and PEFA proposals for consultants .
December 1, 2003	identify appropriate evaluator(s) and confirm participation
December 10, 2003	provide evaluator(s) with evidence of project objectives, activities and outputs
February 15, 2004	evaluator(s) provide preliminary report to Task Manager and PEFA Secretariat .
March 15, 2004	Evaluators submit final report to DFG Secretariat

Electronic-Based Governance in the Electronic Age
Final Evaluation Report
March 2004

Commissioned from Bluebell Research Ltd

Electronic-Based Governance in the Electronic Age

Final Evaluation Report
March 2004

Catherine Hare (Bluebell Research Ltd)
&
Dr Julie McLeod (Northumbria University)

Executive Summary

Introduction

This is the final evaluation report on the *Evidence Based Governance in the Electronic Age* project, contracted to the International Records Management Trust (IRMT), for the World Bank Task Manager and PEFA (Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability) Secretariat. The project, jointly funded by the World Bank, DFID and the Commonwealth Secretariat, comprises three phases:

- Phase I – Diagnostic Studies and Assessment Tools (July 2001 - June 2003).
- Phase II – Global Forum (July 2002 – January 2003)
- Phase III – Capacity Building (March 2003 – June 2006)

The evaluation encompassed the first two phases (completed) and the progress to date in Phase III. Its scope was to:

- assess the project against seven dimensions;
- identify recommendations for strengthening the project's sustainability and impact and future focus of work in this area;
- draw lessons for the implementation of future partnerships.

The methodology comprised the analysis of a range of documents, interviews with key stakeholders and software evaluation. The evaluation utilised the principles of research design to assess both the *outcomes* and the *process* of the project.

Assessment against dimensions

Evaluation against the seven core dimensions revealed the following:

relevance: the project is relevant in terms of records management theory and the state of world government today, with the inexorable shift globally to e-government. It establishes the foundation of what countries should be doing in terms of recordkeeping.

effectiveness: most of what were set as target activities have been completed. The project has been effective as a catalyst but, because it involved so many different countries and different stakeholders, the effect has had different levels of impact. It is clear that, for the sample of records professionals interviewed, the project has already effected records management in their countries. For the sponsors, however, they are seeing a longer timescale from their wider perspective and so the effect has been less.

efficiency: in cost terms the participants clearly acknowledge the efficiency of the project as it provided them with additional resources, while the sponsors, as the resource providers, translate

the return differently. From the evaluators' perspective, it is difficult to assess the efficiency, although the outputs of the project have the potential to provide a valuable return on the investment. The true test of efficiency will be the extent to which the work already undertaken can act as effective building blocks for future development.

sustainability: this remains a big query. At country level some progress is evident from the sample of records professionals interviewed. The World Bank needs to take a lead here – this will be one of the keys to achieving sustainability. But the sustainability will also depend on getting the range of stakeholders active in the e-environment involved. One of the keys contributions from this project will be the tools and guidance that are being developed, but they will need to be easy to use.

institutional development impact: there is evidence of the potential for institutional development but again the tools and guidance are critical to success.

process and implementation: the project is complex and involves a large number of people, with different agendas, and a wide range of activities, many of which depend on technology. The whole process has been worked through, following the scheduled phases and lead successfully by the IRMT teams. Elements of the process however were unclear, especially in terms of what happened, when, how and why. Whilst the evaluators were ultimately able to fit the various pieces together, it took significant effort. Potential users now and in the future may have much greater difficulty and insufficient willingness to do so. This could have a negative impact on (a) uptake and use of the project outputs and (b) learning from the process.

Sustainability, impact and future work

Recommendations to strengthen sustainability and impact are that:

- the World Bank takes the lead in embedding records management within the bank and within the public sector reform programme
- the global network that has been successfully created remains active and continues to develop and in particular brings in the non-converted i.e. the stakeholder groups other than the records professionals
- donor funding enhances the efforts of the strategies being developed at country level.

Other points to note are that the project is a good beginning but, to maximise the investment to date, future phases are essential. All of the success and hard work to date could disappear if the momentum is not maintained, in particular through the development, testing and application of easy to use tools with clear guidance.

Lessons for implementing future partnerships

The lessons that can be drawn from the project for implementation of future partnerships are that:

- the partnership dimension, under the guidance of IRMT, has been an important success factor
- the use of an independent agency, in the form of IRMT, enabled the partnerships to have a breadth, which was very beneficial, however
- the complexity and a certain fluidity in the project resulted in a lack of communication between the sponsors; more regular, informal updating as a project progresses would, therefore, be valuable.

Issues considered

The following three core issues were taken into account in conducting the evaluation:

- i. degree of ownership of the project objectives by records professionals, records creators and users in participating countries
- ii. appropriateness of the project methodology as a means of change management in the context of the transition to electronic governance
- iii. quality of the Records Management Capacity Framework.

Regarding these issues:

- i. it is clear that the records professionals feel ownership for the aims of the project. What is less clear is the extent to which they will be able to translate the objectives into practice with the records creators and users. This may need to be undertaken in another project or a series of projects, which will require funding.
- ii. the project methodology contains methods and techniques, for example, partnership building and the capacity framework, which have the potential to act as agents of change management. However, in order for the change to be managed, it requires concerted involvement from the donors, the countries and, in particular, groups other than those who have already been converted to the programme e.g. ICT staff, records creators and administrators.
- iii. the idea of the capacity framework is born out of inspiration and is full of imagination. It has the potential to, and is worthy of, becoming the cornerstone of an integrated approach to records management as part of public sector reform.

The evaluation of the RMCAS (Records Management Capacity Assessment System) software tool (test version) revealed its strengths to be:

- the basic concept of being able to assess, at the top level, records management capacity in a particular organisation based on the views (input) of the various stakeholders
- the potential to synthesise a complex situation from the perspectives of the various stakeholders in relation to two key dimensions of organisational environment and RM lifecycle elements
- the power of the three-dimensional graphical representation of records management capacity to give a visualisation of the assessment

- the potential for using the 3-d graph as a starting point for making improvements through partnerships between the different stakeholders, particularly the records managers/archivists and the government staff, given their perspectives are represented by two of the dimensions.

A series of specific recommendations about the future development of the software are included in the main report. They cover: installation, documentation, the Help function, design and related issues, the demo database and the importance of training to use the tool.

Key findings

In summary the key findings of the evaluation are that:

- the project is meeting a need which is acknowledged by the range of stakeholders involved in evidence-based governance in the electronic age
- IRMT's reputation and expertise have been key elements in developing the proposal, securing funding, involving a wide range of participants and executing project phases to date
- the World Bank's involvement has engaged interest and support for the project in government circles across the world
- the project to date has achieved the involvement and active participation of a large number of countries, both large and small, developing and developed
- the project has established networks within and across different stakeholder groups through the videoconferences
- the tools identified as project deliverables are recognised as important by both sponsors and participants but there is some concern that they may be over complex and that other types of aids are necessary to build capacity and provide the practical help needed
- the initial assessments tools were over complex but they have fulfilled an important role as stepping stones in the development of the software tool
- the RMCAS tool is a highly imaginative and potentially hugely powerful tool, but it must be completed and sustained
- the Training Resources database is an important facility and again potentially very useful but it will be very resource intensive to maintain and without maintenance its value will diminish.

Conclusion

In conclusion the project is ambitious and hugely challenging, and has achieved so much, first in relation to the project in hand but also for other similar projects. It provides valuable lessons on which to build and, by focusing on the findings of this evaluation, is more likely to deliver what is really required. The evaluators acknowledge the calibre of the work achieved to date and would like to wish the project team every success in completing it.

Evidence Based Governance in the Electronic Age

Final Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

This is the final evaluation report on the *Evidence Based Governance in the Electronic Age* project, contracted to the International Records Management Trust (IRMT), for the World Bank Task Manager and PEFA (Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability) Secretariat. The purpose of the evaluation, which is a requirement of the Development Grant Facility (DGF), is:

“to enhance development impact by articulating lessons learned; to provide information to the funding organisations; and to provide external validation for accountability purposes. It is also intended to provide an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the implementation arrangements for the project and to determine lessons learned that could be helpful in designing future partnerships.”

Terms of Reference for Independent Evaluation (p.3)

The contents of this report are as specified in the terms of reference.

2. The project

The *Evidence Based Governance in the Electronic Age* project is the records management component of the World Bank DGF funded umbrella programme entitled Forging Partnership for Good Governance in Public Expenditure and Records Management of which public expenditure and financial accountability is the primary part. It is a five-year project, which began in July 2001, and whose principal partners are:

- World Bank
- IRMT
- UK Department for International Development (DFID)
- Commonwealth Secretariat (CS)
- Governments of Canada and Malaysia, and
- the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

To date a total of 37 other countries have contributed staff time to the project.

2.1 Aims and objectives

The aims of the project are to:

- reduce the risks to countries of working without reliable and authentic evidence

- assist countries to assess their own needs and set their own priorities in this area by providing tools that are scalable to different resource environments, scales of administration and cultural heritages
- provide methodologies for problem solving that can be shared and thus reduce costs
- provide a means of harmonizing donor reforms in the area of records management
- enhance the impact of reforms
- mainstream the approaches developed within the World Bank and other partners.

Terms of Reference for Independent Evaluation (p.2)

The project objectives are:

- to build global awareness and capacity to manage records (paper and electronic) as evidence of policies, actions, transactions and entitlements in relation to core government functions and governance objectives
- to provide a means of benchmarking capacity against international good practice standards (as performance indicators), without being prescriptive, and of building capacity and ownership of solutions in relation to widely differing contexts, and
- in particular to address the management of records relating to public expenditure and financial accountability, human resource management and the rule of law.

Terms of Reference for Independent Evaluation (p.1)

2.2 Activities

The project comprises three phases:

- Phase I – Diagnostic Studies and Assessment Tools (July 2001 - June 2003).
Funded by World Bank DGF
- Phase II – Global Forum (July 2002 – January 2003)
Funded by DFID and the Commonwealth Secretariat
- Phase III – Capacity Building (March 2003 – June 2006)
Year 3 of project funded by DGF/Development of software for Records Management
Capacity Model funded by Governance Knowledge Sharing Programme (GKSP)

Phase I involved:

- conducting case studies to explore the requirements for managing electronic and paper records, and
- developing assessment tools to measure quality of records systems and identify areas of weakness.

The case studies were undertaken in different countries at different stages of development and within three key (functional) areas of governance - finance, human resources and legal. Some countries were involved in more than one of the areas. From this the project team developed

assessment tools for each of the three areas plus a generic assessment tool. The assessment tools were completed in October and November 2002 and passed to the Task Managers for peer review in early 2003, leading to a formal peer review session in May 2003. Development of these assessment tools was the beginning of the move towards developing the records management capacity framework.

Phase II supplemented this diagnosis by discussing the issues with records management practitioners and other stakeholders. The 'global discussion forum' comprised:

- four electronic discussions for records creators and professionals
- eight regional video conferences for senior government staff
- face-to-face meetings for senior records professionals representing the 37 client countries.

In addition this phase included a training activity: training for regional trainers (initially scheduled for July 2002 but took place in September 2002) and training of national archivists by the regional trainers (initially scheduled for August 2002 but which took place in September 2002). All of these activities were a crucial part of the communication strategy, helping to raise awareness of the project and of the issues under investigation during its lifetime.

Phase III, Capacity Building, has as its focus the development and testing of a Records Management Capacity Framework which is linked to ISO 15489:1 (2001). Its purpose is to enable stakeholders to assess and then develop their capacity for managing records in the three key areas for governance. This phase also addressed continuing skills development and, through a global programme, development of skills needed to manage electronic records. (Annual Report 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 p.7)

In March 2003 the IRMT undertook a major in-depth case study in Malaysia on managing electronic records to meet the requirements of electronic government, funded by the Government of Malaysia. This project does not appear to have been part of the original project plan. Whilst potentially very valuable its purpose and relationship/integration with the original aims of the project needs to be clarified.

In the same month, the IRMT began a project with the Government of Botswana and a team of records analysts from Kenya and Canada to evaluate the assessment questions and the core requirements for the capacity framework in government agencies. Again its relationship/integration with the project plan needs to be made.

2.3 Deliverables

The project deliverables are a combination of soft and hard outputs. Some are implied within the project aims and objectives and others are explicitly identified within the project activities. The evaluators have identified the following deliverables:

- 14 diagnostic case studies documenting the issues in managing records as evidence in three functional areas (financial management, human resource management and court management)

- discussion of records management issues with stakeholders and raising of awareness
- training the trainers
- cascaded training of national archivists
- assessment tools - a records management capacity framework
- development of training programmes.

3. Scope of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was as specified in the introduction above; it encompassed the first two phases (completed) and the progress to date in Phase III. Its scope was:

- the assessment of the project against seven dimensions, viz. relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, institutional development impact, process and implementation;
- the identification of recommendations for strengthening the project's sustainability and impact and future focus of work in this area;
- lessons to be drawn for implementation of future partnerships.

The following three core issues were taken into account in conducting the evaluation:

- degree of ownership of the project objectives by records professionals, records creators and users in participating countries
- appropriateness of the project methodology as a means of change management in the context of the transition to electronic governance
- quality of the Records Management Capacity Framework.

4. Methodology

4.1 Sources of data

The following project outputs were used as the basis for the evaluation:

- annual project reports 1 July 2001 – 30 June 2002 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003
- reports on specific project elements Jan-Sep 2002 Building Awareness and Capacity
- video tapes *Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age* World Bank/IRMT live conference sessions from the World Bank to a face-to-face meeting in South Africa and to countries in the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific regions
- e-discussion transcripts with records creators, users and managers on the significance of records for good governance, electronic government, accountability and transparency and access to information and capacity building requirements
- case studies 14 case studies on records management in relation to financial management, human resource management and court management
- country financial accountability assessment for Ethiopia

- assessment toolsone generic tool for records and information management systems and three specific tools for financial, human resources and legal/judicial records and information management systems
- the Records Management Capacity Framework assessment and capacity building tool.

In addition seven interviews were conducted with donors and project participants.

It must be recognised that these sources of data provide information about what was done, when and how and the activities, opinions, concerns and views of the project participants. They do not provide information about non-participants i.e. individuals and/or countries who could or should have participated but did not, for whatever reason.

4.2 Evaluation design

The evaluation utilised the principles of research design to assess both the *outcomes* and the *process* or *implementation* of the project (Peterson, 1998; Weiss, 1972).

The *outcome evaluation* established the outputs of the project, addressed the extent to which the project's aims and objectives were achieved and measured the impact. The end result of this aspect of the evaluation is:

- a qualitative assessment of actual achievements against planned aims and objectives
- a description and qualitative assessment of the project outputs
- identification of unexpected/unwanted outcomes, and
- an impact assessment.

The *process evaluation* addressed the project methodology and its implementation including multiple stakeholder involvement. The end result of this aspect of the evaluation is:

- a qualitative assessment of the appropriateness of the project design/methodology
- comparison of actual events with the project plan
- explanations of why implementation deviated from the plan (if appropriate).

The evaluation presented in this report is based on the analysis of the interviews with the project donors and participants, documentary analysis and review and testing of the RMCAS software. A mapping of the evaluation process against the terms of reference is provided in Appendix 1 and a list of the people interviewed in Appendix 2.

5. Core issues

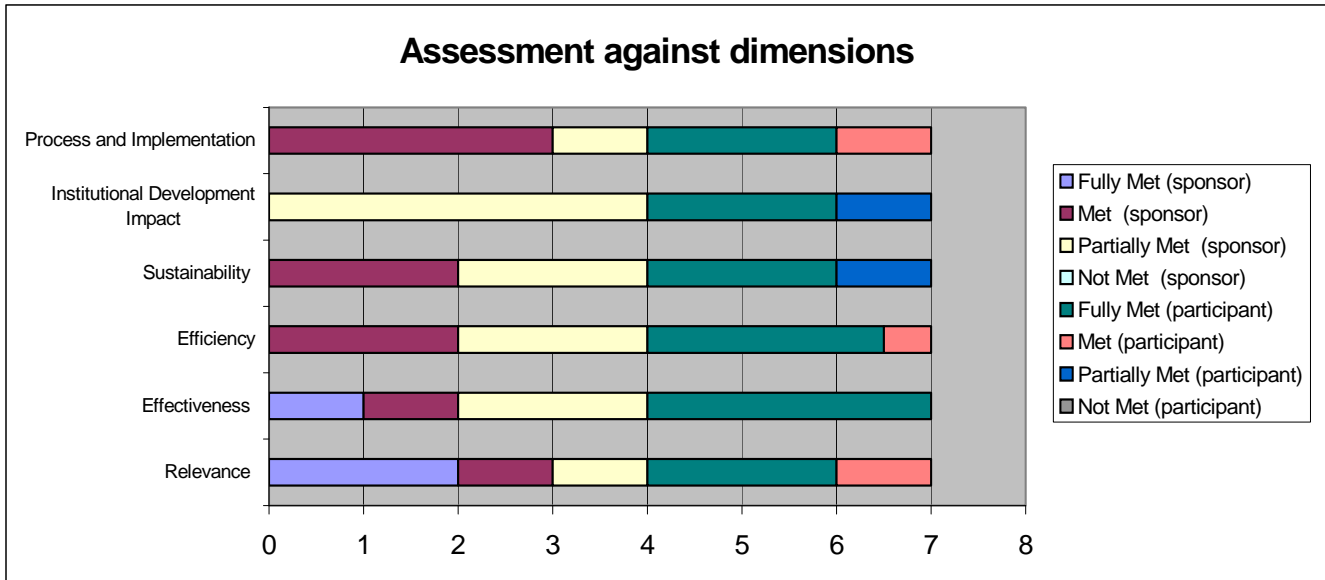
The core issues address top level goals, which are key to the overall impact and effect of the project. They were targeted at different stakeholder groups, which is appropriate, but need to work together for a successful outcome . Below is a top level evaluation of the extent to which they have been achieved, which is amplified with more detail in Sections 6 and 7

- *degree of ownership of the project objectives by records professionals, records creators and users in participating countries* It is clear that the records professionals feel ownership for the aims of the project. They are very much the converted and have seen their own expertise and status raised by the project. What is less clear is the extent to which they will be able to translate the objectives into practice with the records creators and users. In order to get the records creators and users to buy in and share the objectives they will need further support. They have already identified the need for tools, such as sample policies, but require other practical assistance based on real experience of what has worked in particular environments. This may need to be undertaken in another project or a series of projects, which will require funding.
- *appropriateness of the project methodology as a means of change management in the context of the transition to electronic governance* The project methodology contains methods and techniques, for example, partnership building and the capacity framework, which have the potential to act as agents of change management. However, in order for the change to be managed, it requires concerted involvement from the donors, the countries and, in particular, groups other than those who have already been converted to the programme e.g ICT staff, records creators and administrators.
- *quality of the Records Management Capacity Framework*. The idea of the capacity framework is born out of inspiration and is full of imagination. While the detail in Section 7 gives a full assessment and includes suggestions for improvement, the overall evaluation is that this tool deserves as much attention as possible so that its use becomes widespread. It has the potential to, and is worthy of, becoming the cornerstone of an integrated approach to records management as part of public sector reform.

6. Responses to seven core evaluation dimensions, recommendations and lessons learned

This section provides a summary of the interview data, which is principally qualitative, but it is supplemented by a quantitative assessment as presented in Figure 1, combined with a summary evaluation against each dimension from the evaluators. A more detailed record of the interviews is provided in Appendix 3.

Figure 1



a. Relevance

b. Relevance

- Despite looking at the project from very different perspectives, both sponsors and participants found the project relevant, as can be seen quite clearly in Figure 1 where four out of seven responses confirmed that relevance has been fully met.
- The sponsors highlight its relevance to the different sponsor groups with which they are associated but note that the role of records management is not globally accepted as a priority, despite the unique contribution by IRMT in promoting this public policy perspective. There is an acknowledgement that it does relate to what the countries should be doing, so is relevant, but there is then the question of how to get it “to bite”.
- The participants identified the benefits of sharing experience and the opportunity to interact with the different stakeholder groups involved in electronic-based governance in the electronic age, demonstrating the very direct relevance to them.

Summary

- The project is relevant in terms of records management theory and the state of world government today, with the inexorable shift globally to e-government. It establishes the foundation of what countries should be doing in terms of recordkeeping.

c. Effectiveness

- Again a very positive response from the participants but a less consensual assessment from the sponsors, who are considering a much wider perspective.
- The sponsors have quite different views with one underlining the sheer number of participants involved and the strategic breakthrough achieved, compared with the clear statement that, while records management is becoming apparent in documents and reports

in the World Bank, it has still not reached the mainstream, which can only happen through the development of tools, seen as a task for the World Bank and not IRMT. There is the belief that the project has the potential to be effective but that the effectiveness has not yet been fully achieved.

- For the participants interviewed the project has been highly effective, despite slight inhibitions about participating in the e-discussions, either because of being overawed by the technology or by the calibre of the inputs from colleagues from more developed countries.

Summary

- Although the objectives of the project are not clearly stated as such in the terms of reference for the evaluation, most of what were set as target activities have been completed. The project has been effective as a catalyst but, because it involved so many different countries and different stakeholders, the effect has had different levels of impact. It is clear that, for the sample of records professionals interviewed, the project has already effected records management in their countries. For the sponsors, however, they are seeing a longer timescale from their wider perspective and so the effect has been less.

d. Efficiency

- Not surprisingly there is a rather different assessment from the two groups in terms of the project's efficiency. The sponsors are much more cost aware and rate it less highly.
- The sponsors, on the whole, feel that they have got a return on their investment but are aware of the cost. A specific point is made about the large volume of outputs, which are a key part of the process, but they have not yet had an impact.
- The participants rate the efficiency very highly, recognising the high quality of the input and the provision of the guides and tools.

Summary

- In cost terms the participants clearly acknowledge the efficiency of the project as it provided them with additional resources, while the sponsors, as the resource providers, translate the return differently. From the evaluators' perspective, it is difficult to assess the efficiency, although the outputs of the project have the potential to provide a valuable return on the investment. For example, the video *Electronic-Based Governance in the Electronic Age* provides a valuable resource for raising awareness and has the potential to be used across the world. The individual video conferences and case study documents provide valuable snapshots of the situation in a variety of countries at a particular point in time. In addition the case studies have potential to have great impact, but would need to be synthesised and summarised to be useful at the country level. If the software tool is completed and fit for purpose, and if it is promoted appropriately and used widely, it has huge potential to achieve an unquestionable return on investment. The true test of efficiency, however, will be the extent to which the work already undertaken can act as effective building blocks for future developments.

e. Sustainability

- In terms of sustainability the two groups have differing views.

- The sponsors vary in their views between seeing a good start, resulting from the focus on archivists and IRMT's key role in establishing partnerships and generating interest, and hesitating because the 'jury is still out' and re-affirming the need for the tools and to build on lessons learned. This is an area of concern because there is a feeling that people will only get involved when there is something in it for them but need to have their awareness raised to be able then to see the potential. The whole area of doing diagnostic work better is a real challenge as is how to support government lead reform at the country level.
- The participants are more positive seeing the creation of an environment and infrastructure for sustainability through such actions as updating of legislation, the issuing of circulars, the setting up of task forces or committees, although also recognising the need for the tools to build capacity.

Summary

- This remains a big query. At country level some progress is evident from the sample of records professionals interviewed, but they are viewing the sustainability from their own focused, national perspective. The World Bank needs to take a lead here – this will be one of the keys to achieving sustainability. But the sustainability will also depend on getting the range of stakeholders active in the e-environment involved, i.e. not only the converted in the form of the records professionals. Issues relating to development of infrastructure are crucial and there is evidence, in the video conferences, that countries are developing their own strategies, but they also need help from the donor community. One of the keys contributions from this project will be the tools and guidance that are being developed, but they will need to be easy to use.

f. Institutional development impact

- Given that one group has a global perspective on the project and the other a national perspective again there is quite a difference in their assessments.
- The sponsors agree that there has been some impact relating to the involvement of the different stakeholders, for example, but emphasize that the project is only partly completed and the tools need to be fully developed and made available.
- For the participants they have all seen direct cause and effect between the project and developments in their own country, but acknowledge that they are still at the learning stage.

Summary

- At this stage, because the project is only partly completed, the impact rating comes principally from the participants, rather than the sponsors. There is however evidence of the potential for institutional development but again the tools and guidance are critical to success.

g. Process and implementation

- Both groups gave a positive assessment but for very different reasons.
- The sponsors identified problems with getting the project proposal accepted and funding agreed but underlined the key role of IRMT's relationships with the various sponsors in

getting the project go-ahead. The process is seen as having been very thorough, with potential for transferability of the model-based approach.

- The participants concentrated on their experience of participation in the project and indicated that it was well planned and well directed and that it had helped to raise awareness and promote their expertise. Their negative comments were to do with low participation in the e-discussions and the barrier of connectivity problems.

Summary

- With regard to this aspect it was the sponsors who had the total overview. The project is complex and involves a large number of people, with different agendas, and a wide range of activities, many of which depend on technology. The whole process has been worked through, following the scheduled phases and lead successfully by the IRMT teams. Elements of the process however were unclear, especially in terms of what happened, when, how and why (for example the link between the three specific and one generic assessment tools and the RIMCAS/RMCAS/RMCF). Other opportunities, for example the case study in Malaysia, which fell within the time frame, have been embraced and incorporated. Because the IRMT teams changed over the course of the project, there has been some lack of continuity. This has also been an issue within the World Bank. Whilst the evaluators were ultimately able to fit the various pieces together, it took significant effort. Potential users now and in the future may have much greater difficulty and insufficient willingness to do so. This could have a negative impact on (a) uptake and use of the project outputs and (b) learning from the process.

h. Recommendations to strengthen sustainability and impact

- The sponsors recommend that
 - There is a need for records management to be mainstreamed by linking it directly into government and ministerial agendas.
 - The World Bank needs to publicise project outputs, to incorporate them into training programmes and to prepare a document to provide guidance on records management within the World Bank and for donor agencies.
 - It is a good idea to pursue on more than one front i.e. involving different donors
 - It is important to promote a stepped and phased approach, which has not always been the case with World Bank projects, encouraging partner governments to reach for the sky and resulting in their falling short
- The participants recommend that:
 - The World Bank remains involved in the project to ensure governmental level support and participation.
 - The non-converted need to be targeted i.e. fewer archivists and more representatives from the other stakeholder groups involved in evidence-based governance in the electronic age.
 - The issue of connectivity difficulties needs to be addressed.
 - The experience of different country types be used as case studies.

Summary

- It is important that

- the World Bank takes the lead in embedding records management within the bank and within the public sector reform programme
- the global network that has been successfully created remains active and continues to develop and in particular brings in the non-converted i.e. the stakeholder groups other than the records professionals
- donor funding enhances the efforts of the strategies being developed at country level.

h. Lessons for implementation of future partnerships

- The sponsors noted :
 - The key and crucial role of IRMT in leading and driving the donors.
 - It is a good idea to promote the use of partnership and outreach from the outset to embrace the broader group. IRMT's independence makes this wider reach feasible as they are less constrained by bureaucracy.
 - The potential benefits of the donors meeting together.
 - The need for more time for the Task Manager to 'intensively manage' the project.
- The participants noted
 - The successful management of the project by IRMT
 - The importance of network building across the partnership
 - The need for more regular and informal communication with IRMT (in addition to the formal project reports)

Summary

- It is clear that the partnership dimension, under the guidance of IRMT, has been an important success factor within the project.
- The use of an independent agency, in the form of IRMT, enabled the partnerships to have a breadth, which was very beneficial to the project
- However, the complexity and a certain fluidity in the project has resulted in a lack of communication between the sponsors, who would have welcomed more informal updating as the project progressed.

i. Other points

- The sponsors suggest:
 - The complexity of the project requires a mapping of the activities in the reporting.
 - There needs to be a sequencing of actions for public management reform and an establishment of basic requirements and pre-requisites for evidence-based governance in the electronic age.
- The participants:
 - Consider it to be a very worthwhile project but feel that there is a need for further practical tools, such as sample policies.
 - Believe that they need concrete programmes and manuals for managing e-records.

Summary

- The project is a good beginning but, to maximise the investment to date, future phases are essential.
- Important seeds have been sown but they now need resources to germinate and flourish.

- All of the success and hard work to date could disappear if the momentum is not maintained, in particular through the development, testing and application of easy to use tools with clear guidance.
- On first reading of the ‘generic’ assessment tool it was not immediately obvious how to complete the sections, labelled [], to tailor it without comparing it to one of the specific assessment tools. These early versions were extremely long and complex and, whilst other points could be made, it seems inappropriate to do so here in light of their refinement within the context of the RMCAS software tool.
- The Training Resources Database is very impressive in terms of content coverage. It is a vital resource in the absence of training materials developed specifically for and within the project. The one concern is that it has a maintenance cost to keep it current and the obvious question is ‘who will be responsible for this?’ Educational strategies are clearly part of the current phase of the project (Phase III) and are certain to require further funding to be achieved.

7. Quality of the RMCAS (Records Management Capacity Assessment System) software tool

7.1 Summary evaluation

This is an impressive, innovative, imaginative and unique tool which has enormous and very powerful potential as a practical and valuable aid, not only for the assessment of an organisation’s records management capacity, but also as a communication tool and catalyst for building partnerships between the key stakeholders to progress future development. Overall the tool’s underlying principles and philosophy are sound but the relevance and validity of some of the outputs raise questions.

The tool’s strengths are:

- the basic concept of being able to assess, at the top level, records management capacity in a particular organisation based on the views (input) of the various stakeholders
- the potential to synthesise a complex situation from the perspectives of the various stakeholders in relation to two key dimensions of organisational environment and RM lifecycle elements
- the power of the three-dimensional graphical representation of records management capacity to give a visualisation of the assessment
- the potential for using the 3-d graph as a starting point for making improvements through partnerships between the different stakeholders, particularly the records managers/archivists and the government staff, given their perspectives are represented by two of the dimensions.

Whilst it is recognised that to arrive at such a ‘simple’ view of an organisation’s records management capacity requires a sophisticated underlying ‘engine’, the latter should not be so ‘up front’ for the user that it might cause confusion. In some respects the user interface to the current version of the software tool does fall into this trap. Some of the Help text, reports and

data presentation tools are unclear and could easily lead to confusion. This could undermine the purpose of the tool, risk it not making the impact it deserves and is capable of achieving and, may even lead to mis-use or mis-interpretation.

A summary of recommendations are provided at the end of this section, arising from the detailed assessment which follows.

7.2 Detailed assessment points

Installation

A general point to note is that the evaluators had severe difficulties downloading and installing the software. Downloading from the IRMT website took over 40 minutes (not the 20 minutes suggested) and installation failed in a networked PC environment using Windows XP. (This was due to insufficient write privileges to a system directory, which is likely to be an issue in other organisational contexts). The first attempt at installing the software from CD-ROM onto a laptop running Windows XP was unsuccessful. The software installation appeared to be still in progress after 40 minutes but exit (using alt-ctrl-del) resulted in a message suggesting installation was in fact complete. Subsequently, trying to run RMCAS failed, as a result of apparent unsuccessful installation of the SQL server software. A second attempt at installing the software from the CD-ROM was ultimately successful, although two virus alerts were issued and an SQL error message received.

Documentation

The documentation received about the RMCF tool appears to describe earlier and later versions of the tool and is very confusing and apparently contradictory in places. In particular one document refers to capacity levels of 0-5 and another of levels 1-5. At one point Level 1 is defined as “non-existent or undeveloped” records management capacity and at another as “basic records management policies, systems and processes are defined but are not consistently and effectively applied across the organisation”, leaving Level 0 to be the non-existent policies etc. The software appears to include Level 0 statements, although no Level 5 statements are included in the demo database. This is very confusing.

Help facility

In contrast the information within the Help function makes it easier to understand the software tool. However, whilst the description of the project, the context and the generic use of RMCAS given in the introduction and application overview are good, there still needs to be a short introduction about the tool itself and its purpose to bridge the gap between initial entry and the detail of the specific elements. (This would also need to be covered in training).

The text in the section ‘using the application’ is very good and clear.

Terminology is not always used consistently (eg role and post), the term ‘entity’ does not appear in the glossary, its meaning in the RMCAS context is unclear and, in any event, is a potentially dangerous term to use (given its particular meaning within the context of databases).

Design

It is clear that the overly complex initial assessment tools used for conducting interviews to collect the data, used by the RMCAS tool, have been simplified somewhat. This is to be commended. However, the interviews potentially still represent a huge investment of time and this may not be practical in the real situation. The identification of the primary sources of data and the key questions do help.

The user interface is clear but an introductory screen leading to Help and the demo database would be useful. Arial rather than Times Roman font would make the text easier to read, as well as being consistent with the font used in the tool itself.

Capacity assessments

It took some time to unpick the algorithms underlying the calculation of assessments and they seem to vary depending on whether the 3-d capacity statement is being viewed or one of the two-dimensional organisational environment and RM lifecycle summary reports. Despite the explanation in the Help text, is the use of the term 'Records lifecycle' as one of the attributes of the RM lifecycle element appropriate? Can interview questions relate to all stages of the records lifecycle or just more than one specific stage? Clarity is essential as is appropriateness.

The implication is that the (3-d) capacity assessment is based on the lowest score of any one element and thus appears to ignore what might be a very good capacity rating in another area. Assuming this interpretation is correct then it would appear that the algorithm is insufficiently sophisticated and does not take full advantage of the opportunity that the technology provides.

The purpose of both a 'top' and 'lowest' capacity (RM lifecycle element summary report) is unclear, particularly when Help suggests there is only a single capacity assessment which, in fact, would be the lowest score. The total number of capacity statements given in this report seems to be meaningless. It would be more useful to show the actual numbers in the context of the potential total number.

The meaning and value of the two-dimensional reports (Organisational environment element and RM lifecycle element) are unclear. The capacity level of the organisational element is based on the mean average score of the RM lifecycle elements and vice versa but what does this tell the organisation? How does it help them?

What would be more meaningful would be a two-dimensional graphical view (similar to the 3-d graphical view) of any one organisational environment element across all RM lifecycle elements and vice versa. For example, 'awareness and ownership' across all RM lifecycle elements or 'records capture and registration' across all organisational environment elements. This would then provide a qualitative view of *part* of the 3-d model, i.e. an extraction from the 3-d version, which could form a very useful starting point for the various stakeholders in an organisation to work in partnership on implementing improvements. And it would seem more appropriate to use the same (whole number) capacity scores, given the definitions of the 0/1-5 capacity levels, than mean average scores. (Note: the evaluators would be very happy to explore further the details of

the underlying algorithms/calculations and their rationale to confirm that this interpretation and resultant suggestions for improvement are correct and valid.)

Reports

The names of the reports do not always clearly represent the content, for example, ‘assessment summary’ is actually the ‘capacity assessment summary’; and ‘current capacity statement’ might be expected to provide more than simply a re-presentation of the data collected. However, there are potentially some very useful detailed reports available but their purpose and use needs to be made clear to the users.

Other functionality

The purpose of the option to ‘undelete’ an assessment is unclear and potentially dangerous. The meaning of ‘apply’ and ‘reset’ in the interview question data entry form are unclear.

Demo database content

It is very helpful to have content in the demo version but it would be even more valuable if it were complete (some questions were unanswered and yet the interview was marked as ‘complete’) and more realistic.

Using RMCAS

To be most effective, it is vital that users are trained to use the tool. If it were not possible to do this face-to-face then a simple tutorial could be developed and included with the software.

7.3 Summary recommendations

- **Installation**
 - it is vital that the download and installation process is improved so that it is simple, can be done as quickly as possible, is reliable and complete.
- **Documentation**
 - it is vital that the number of levels and their definitions is clarified and used consistently within the software and in all documentation.
- **Help Function**
 - clearer explanation of the capacity score and there are gaps in the text (eg reports – capacity statement) which need to be filled.
 - clearer and consistent use of terminology within the Help function
 - corrections to typos/grammatical errors and completion of the Help text
 - better introduction and application overview (in Help function) which succinctly explain the purpose of the tool and how to start using it, rather than the context in which it was developed and can be used
- **Design and related issues**
 - consistency in use of font, standardising on Arial
 - clarification of concepts and use of terminology in the RM lifecycle element
 - it is recommended that the value and use of the various reports is tested in real situations and the range is refined accordingly with very clear explanations provided in the documentation and Help text.

- inclusion of appropriate two-dimensional views of the capacity assessment, specifically any single organisational environmental element viewed against all RM lifecycle elements and vice versa
- **Demo database**
 - inclusion of complete and realistic data as an example in the demo version.
- **Using RMCAS**
 - it is vital that users are trained to use the tool with the possible addition of a tutorial to the software tool.

8. Summary of key findings

- The project is meeting a need which is acknowledged by the range of stakeholders involved in evidence-based governance in the electronic age.
- IRMT's reputation and expertise have been key elements in developing the proposal, securing funding, involving a wide range of participants and executing project phases to date.
- The World Bank's involvement has engaged interest and support for the project in government circles across the world.
- The project to date has achieved the involvement and active participation of a large number of countries, both large and small, developing and developed.
- The project has established networks within and across different stakeholder groups through the videoconferences.
- The tools identified as project deliverables are recognised as important by both sponsors and participants but there is some concern that they may be over complex and that other types of aids are necessary to build capacity and provide the practical help needed.
- The initial assessments tools were over complex but they have fulfilled an important role as stepping stones in the development of the software tool
- The RMCAS tool is a highly imaginative and potentially hugely powerful tool , but it must be completed and sustained.
- The Training Resources database is an important facility and again potentially very useful but it will be very resource intensive to maintain and without maintenance its value will diminish.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations which follow have to be viewed in the context of data gathered from participants i.e. reports, in the form of interviews and documents, of what took place. They do not cover what did not happen because of those who did not take part. Also they are presented in relation to the outcomes and the process of the project, without repeating the detail of all of the recommendations identified earlier in the report but with references to where the detail can be found.

9.1 Outcomes evaluation

- Most of what were identified as target activities in the terms of reference for the evaluation have been completed and an unexpected outcome was the Malaysian case study which made good use of an opportunity which arose during the project.
- The project has gathered and generated a wealth of information. For this considerable information to have maximum usability and impact, the project contractor and sponsors will need to consider carefully how best to package the materials and make them available.
 - They need to be accessible, understandable and useful to as many of the participants, and potential participants, as possible, recognising that the various countries are in different positions and stages of readiness. The tools need to be practical and simple in order to encourage and enable their adoption and use. (*Section 6 for more detail*)
 - In conducting the evaluation the relationship between the two sets of reports, those relating to particular time periods (annual reports) and those on specific aspects of the project (e.g. Building Awareness and Capacity), has been challenging, in terms of gaining an accurate and holistic view of the whole project. Any potential user of the project's outputs is also likely to find this challenging as would any researcher interested in the subject matter.
- The initial assessment tools, which were very labour intensive and proved overly complex as working aids, have served a valuable purpose as input to the software tool.
- The RMCAS software tool is born out of inspiration, insight and vision and deserves to become a key tool in the work of embedding records management into government recordkeeping. However, in order to achieve this goal, it must be completed and it must be made more easy to use. (*Section 7 for detailed assessment and recommendations*)
- The Training Resources database is an important initiative, recognising as it does the existence of training resources, which could support the human resource aspect of the capacity building for recordkeeping. However it will be difficult to sustain and will lose its value if the maintenance work is not done.

9.2 Process evaluation

- The project has followed through the process as outlined in the original schedule of programme phases. Without sight of the detailed project plans for each phase the evaluators can only compare actual vs planned events at the macro level but at this level the process has achieved what was intended and has therefore been successful.
- The project has generated a lot of activity and involved a lot of participants in different roles and locations as well as at different stages of development.
- To date it has been very successful under the direction of IRMT but there is a need to consolidate and learn from the work done to maximise the effectiveness, and impact and sustainability of the complete project and its outcomes. (*Section 6 for more detail*)
- The combination of methods and techniques used, which combined national and international activities, has very effectively engaged a range of stakeholders in the multi-faceted activity of evidence-based governance in the electronic age. The independence of IRMT and their international standing and status as specialists in records management in

government was a significant success factor in achieving the breadth and variety of participation. This model of partnership is commended for future projects.

- The combination of donors and their participation has also contributed to the breadth of the project. However the donors would have liked and expected more informal updating and reporting than that provided via the formal reports. There also seems to have been an opportunity missed in not bringing the donors together. This is an issue to address in future projects.

In conclusion the project is ambitious and hugely challenging, and has achieved so much, first in relation to the project in hand but also for other similar projects. It provides valuable lessons on which to build and, by focusing on the findings of this evaluation, is more likely to deliver what is really required. The evaluators acknowledge the calibre of the work achieved to date and would like to wish the project team every success in completing it.

10. References

Peterson, A. (1998). *WK Kellogg Foundation Evaluation handbook*. WK Kellogg. Available at: www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub770.pdf [20 Feb 2004].

Weiss, CH. (1972). *Evaluation research: methods of assessing program effectiveness*. Prentice Hall.

Mapping against Terms of Reference

	Dimension(s)	Core Issue
<i>Outcome Evaluation</i>		
• qualitative assessment of actual vs planned aims & objectives	<i>relevance; effectiveness</i>	
• description & qualitative assessment of project outputs		<i>Records Management Capacity Framework</i>
• id. unexpected/unwanted outcomes	<i>process; implementation</i>	
• impact assessment	<i>effectiveness; institutional impact; sustainability</i>	
• cost-benefit analysis	<i>relevance; efficiency</i>	
<i>Process Evaluation</i>		
• qualitative assessment project design/methodology		<i>project methodology</i>
• comparison of events against plan	<i>process; implementation</i>	
• explanation of deviations from plan	<i>process; implementation</i>	
• stakeholder involvement		<i>ownership</i>

	Interviews	Annual Reports	Other Reports	e-discussions	Case studies	Video Conference	Assessment Tools
Dimension							
• relevance;	X						
• effectiveness	X						
• efficiency	X						
• institutional impact	X						
• sustainability	X						
• process	X						
• implementation	X						
Core Issue							
• ownership	X			X		X	
• project methodology	X		X				
• RM Capacity Framework	X		X				X
Other							
• recommendations	X	X		X			
• future focus		X		X	X		
• lessons learned	X			X		X	

Appendix 2

People interviewed

1. Sponsors

Michael Gillibrand: Director of Management and Training Services Division, Commonwealth Secretariat (CS) 1994-July 2003

Garth Glentworth: Senior Governance Adviser, Department for International Development

Mike Stevens: Consultant, formerly Lead Public Sector Reform Specialist with the World Bank (WB) on operations side until 31/12/2003

Nicola Smithers, Head of PEFA Secretariat, World Bank

2. Participants

Charles Gibson: Chief Archivist, Belize Archives Department

Musila Musembi: Director, Kenya National Archives & Documentation Services

Setareki Tale: Government Archivist, National Archives of Fiji

Appendix 3
Summary Analysis of Interviews

The sponsors/donors (4 interviewees)

Dimension	Comment	Fully Met	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Relevance	Clear statement of relevance of the project, both generically to poor countries in general, where governments are in crisis and to Commonwealth countries, which are the smaller countries, for whom the project brought the great benefit of being involved with a global project. But, although the project is relevant, the role of records management in governance is not globally accepted as a priority. However IRMT are making a unique contribution by driving forward this public policy perspective.	2	1	1	
Effectiveness	Very effective from the Commonwealth Secretariat (CS) perspective because of the sheer numbers involved and the buy-in at the strategic and country level. The project has provided a combination of awareness raising and strategic breakthrough by involving government officials. From the World Bank (WB) perspective the effect is becoming apparent in terms of references to records management in documents and reports but it needs to be mainstreamed through the development of tools, which is a task for WB and not IRMT.	1	1	2	
Efficiency	For CS good return on investment but still more needed by making direct link to ministerial agendas. For the WB the cost in developing the tools has been high but this is inevitable because of the cost of consultancy. DFID acknowledge that IRMT are very efficient at project management, but found it more difficult to assess against objectives, having had very little contact during the project and so not really knowing in terms of value for money. For PEFA awful lot of outputs but waiting for impact, although recognises that they are all very important to the process.		2	2	
Sustainability	Good start for CS, because the archivists are beginning to make the change from managing data to managing evidence. Much of this has resulted from IRMT's key role in establishing partnerships which contribute to sustainability. But, from the WB perspective, the 'jury is still out' – progress has been made with records management being accepted as important but not yet integrated for automatic adoption. This reinforces the importance of the tools and the need to build on lessons learned.		2	2	
Dimension	Comment	Fully Met	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
	For DFID sustainability will depend on the overall state of the public sector in the developing				

	country that struggle for money to pay staff. Really difficult but not unusual in comparison with other initiatives. Some countries (eg Ghana) have done better than others. Improvements in the priority areas (HR, finance, legal) and health 'would be brilliant'. For PEFA big question – how do you mainstream it? IRMT through Anne Thurston can generate interest but the network she is working with is loosely formed and the members only engage when they are interested. Also concern about how to do better i.e. less heavy diagnostic work and how to support government lead reform at the country level.				
Institutional Development Impact	The sponsors have seen progress through the involvement of the different stakeholders and mapping of records management activity at the global and national levels. However the full impact will only be seen later – project is only part completed and the WB have a role to play in taking it forward by making the tools available. There is a recognition that, if it did have an impact, it would be enormously beneficial for programmes in other areas especially those mentioned above, but it would need to be supplemented (built upon) on a country basis to have real impact. PEFA were particularly interested in the potential transferability of the model-based approach			4	
Process and Implementation	For the sponsors there were difficulties in getting the project proposal accepted and funded, particularly in getting people to see the strategic dimension and had to battle against a bureaucratic mindset to get records management mainstreamed as a policy agenda item. However IRMT's relationships with the sponsors was a significant contributor to getting the project go-ahead.		3	1	

Appendix 3 continued
Summary Analysis of Interviews
The participants (3 interviewees)

Dimension	Comment	Fully Met	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Relevance	The project was relevant across the different countries represented by the interviewees because it allowed the sharing of practice between the developing and developed countries and brought together the different stakeholder groups involved in electronic-based governance in the electronic age e.g. IT and other information professionals. All participants are operating in the electronic age but not as far developed in e-government.	2	1		
Effectiveness	Highly effective for archivists, although not all participants were fully active in the e-discussions, perhaps because of feeling overawed both by the technology and the calibre of responses from the developed countries. The bringing together of different stakeholders provided a valuable model to use locally.	2.5	0.5		
Efficiency	Very efficient because of the high quality input and the provision of guides and tools, which has resulted in the leveraging of resource to develop services locally.	2.5	0.5		
Sustainability	The project has created an environment for sustainability and has stimulated significant actions in terms of infrastructure e.g. new legislation to incorporate management of current records into archives legislation, issuing of circulars, taskforce/committee established, IRMT following up with relevant people in government circles in different countries. The project will only be sustained if capacity can be built with tools playing a key role.	2		1	
Institutional Development Impact	Direct cause and effect, in term's of the project's impact, on policy development progress, services development and legislation review but a feeling of still being at learning stage where ideas need 'time to germinate and grow and fully bloom'.	2		1	
Process and Implementation	Well planned and well directed. Very positive about the Global Forum meeting in Johannesburg which allowed maximum interchange of ideas, through the combination of plenary and smaller group sessions. The e-discussions were valuable, although there were many non-participants and some problems with connectivity and access. However the weekly summaries were good and have been distributed to colleagues, helping to raise awareness and promote the expertise of archivists. Needs more energy in the management from the World Bank.	2	1		

Ownership of Project objectives

A. Sponsors

- The sponsors agreed that there was shared ownership of the objectives by records creators, which was directly attributed to IRMT's effective networking with records managers and archivists in other countries.

B. Participants

- The participants, all of whom were national archivists, felt strong ownership for the project objectives, because they all feel passionate about the work being done and because it has helped to change the way that archivists are viewed. They are now recognised as having a direct link to governance. However, while public services support records management in principle, they have not been fully convinced, otherwise they would have given more support in practice and resources to implement it.

Appropriateness of project methodology as a means of change management

A. Sponsors

- The design of the methodology was seen as a contributor to change management, through its innovation and responsiveness but, because it is such a dynamic issue, it is difficult to draw a line to show cause and effect. Also key issue of toolkits, which are a key element but there is a danger that they are too complex and they need to be complemented by other things

B. Participants

- The participants believed that the videoconferences worked well and resulted in new understanding and new actions e.g. circulars in Kenya, but e-discussions had a narrower range of participation. The meeting in South Africa was effective for sharing ideas, in terms of theory, but many of the participants would have liked more concrete outputs e.g. a sample email policy.

Quality of Records Management Capacity Framework

A. Sponsors

- The majority of the sponsors had not seen it and one did not understand what it was going to do.
- However recognition that the quality of the development work has been very good.
- Essential that it can be used as light touch as well as in more detailed, drill down mode.
- Very positive about visual representation.

B. Participants

- The participants had not seen but two had heard of it, although not exactly sure about what it would offer, but in theory saw its potential.

Recommendations to strengthen sustainability and impact

A. Sponsors

- Need for records management to be mainstreamed by linking it into government and ministerial agendas
 - Responsibility lies with WB and not IRMT to incorporate project outputs into training programmes, to put them on the website and perhaps to write a working paper of

guidelines on what approach to take and what to do to circulate within WB and to distribute to donor agencies

- More networking amongst aid agency supporters (sponsors). Better communication with sponsors. ‘Converting aid agencies is just as important as converting the countries’.
- Good idea to pursue on more than one front i.e. with other donors e.g. DFID. Through demonstration it will gain its legs.
- Importance of promoting a stepped and phased approach. Important to be opportunistic but Bank needs to recognise that they may be a constraint e.g. encouraging partner governments to reach fro the sky rather that to move forward step by step.
- Importance also of raising awareness but engaging interest and of making the solution relevant and applicable at the country level.

B. Participants

- Criticality of WB involvement to get governmental level involvement
- Need to get to the non-converted i.e. fewer archivists and more from other stakeholder groups
- For developing countries it is not so much an issue of technology barriers but rather connectivity difficulties – therefore need to find way to overcome these
- Possibility of using the experience of different country types as case studies or models for similar countries

Lessons for implementation of future partnerships

A. Sponsors

- The sponsors recognised the key and crucial role of IRMT in leading and driving donors but suggested that there might be benefits of getting the donors together.
- More time is needed, with cost implications, for the Task Manager to ‘intensively manage’ the project.
- Very energetic partnership-building within the programme and impressive breadth. So lesson taken from the project is to reach out from the outset, to seek to engage the broader group, which has not been the case with her group, although more difficult as they are a group of donors. The independence of IRMT allows a wider reach, they are not so constrained by bureaucracy. The project demonstrates the nature of partnerships that can be achieved.

B. Participants

- The participants acknowledged the successful management of the project by IRMT.
- They proposed a use of technology which was less dependent on connectivity and emphasised the importance of network building across the partnership but raised the question of finding a way for the developed countries to get something out of the project.

Other points

A. Sponsors

- The complexity of the project requires a mapping of the activities in the reporting.
- There needs to be a sequencing of actions for public management reform and an establishment of basic requirements and pre-requisites for evidence-based governance in the electronic age, which should be mapped against the toolkits.

B. Participants

- The participants consider it to be a very worthwhile project but feel that there is a need for further projects.
- They feel that, while recognising the importance of evidence-based governance in the electronic age, developing countries have not made a lot of progress with electronic records management. They need to do this as efficiently as possible and therefore need concrete programmes and manuals for managing electronic records via a new project.

Draft PREM Note:

Transparency and Integrity in Government:

Building Data Integrity in Official Information Systems

Transparency and Integrity in Government: Building Data Integrity in Official Information Systems

Managing the records of government activity as evidence for accountability but it is one of a large number of factors that need to be functioning properly to achieve effective public administration and the rule of law. However, effective records systems provide a fundamental basis for public sector integrity which, if ignored, can jeopardise core development aims, particularly in the electronic environment. Two new tools are available to assess whether records management arrangements are problematic.

Core Issues

All records are information, but not all information is a record. Reliable, authentic records provide authoritative evidence of policies, actions and transactions and entitlements. The lack of attention to systems for managing these records has left many poor countries without access to the evidence needed to support accountable and transparent democracies. Initiatives intended to enhance economic performance and strengthen civil society (anti-corruption; administrative and civil service reform; decentralisation; e-government; legal and judicial reform; public expenditure management; tax policy and administration; access to information; and electronic government) all rely upon access to accurate evidence. Managing records efficiently won't halt corruption and bring about accountability, but these goals cannot be achieved without trustworthy evidence. Records management is a crosscutting issue, not sexy but essential and foundational as an enabling infrastructure.

In many developing countries, paper-based records systems have decayed into informality, and as yet there is little capacity or infrastructure for managing fragile digital records as authentic evidence. Two African governments, Ghana and Tanzania, have demonstrated that improvements are achievable and sustainable. Both countries, despite their different political experience, suffered a slow and crippling decline in the management of official records from the 1970s. The causes were similar: outdated legal and institutional arrangements, a lack of policies, standards and practices for creating, organising, using and disposing of records as evidence; outdated skill sets; a lack of awareness of the significance of records for governance; and a lack of political will to protect evidence.

The problems took similar forms. Paper mountains were common in offices and corridors, filling all available storage space. Legally they could not be destroyed, but information became so difficult to retrieve that government operations relied increasingly on memory. Records storage areas became the 'Siberia' to which difficult staff were sent; junior, untrained and demoralised, they had enormous scope for corruption. There was a common belief that computerization represented the only way forward.

Ghana and Tanzania have since achieved dramatic improvements, with DFID support, that have brought immediate relief and created a starting point for managing records created by electronic applications. New laws, policies and procedures have been introduced in line with international

good practice and local resource constraints. Closed files have been transferred to low cost storage or destroyed; and filing systems have been restructured to support modern administrative functions. The improvements have been shown to be robust, reliable and sustainable and have increased the demand for accurate evidence. Ghana and Tanzania are moving forward to apply records management practices to court, financial, human resource and land records and to introduce electronic records management programmes.

A three-year project (2002 to 2004) on Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age, funded by the Bank's Development Grant Facility, highlighted similar conditions in paper-based and electronic environments across the world. Consultations with government officials and records professionals from 38 English-speaking developing countries, including face-to-face, electronic and video conference meetings facilitated by the World Bank Institute, identified inadequate legal and institutional frameworks, lack of accountability and inadequate training as impediments to keeping accurate evidence. Case studies conducted in Latin America, Asia, and Africa provided further evidence of the global nature of the issues and the commonality of the solutions required. See www.irmt.org for summaries of the consultations and reports on the case studies.

Issues for E-Government

In its early stages, e-government tended to focus on enabling technologies and architectures to support online delivery of government services and information; increasingly, the focus is on the quality and integrity of information created through electronic applications. Like traditional paper records, e-records support the daily operation of government and its interactions with citizens and the private sector. As government services move online, e-records will need to be captured and preserved to confirm pension and other entitlements; register births and deaths; verify citizenship; certify voting rights; enable the collection of taxes and census enumeration; support financial management and enable audits and evaluations; help resolve land claims; support litigation; document inter-governmental agreements; enable economic planning; document development; and support countless other information-intensive activities. The intended benefits of e-government will be compromised unless there is an adequate infrastructure for managing e-records as a basic building block.

The speed with which information technologies and electronic records are being adopted around the world is not being matched by the skills and infrastructure to manage them. E-records must remain accessible and usable as long as they are needed for business or legal purposes; some need to be preserved long-term or permanently. If e-records are to survive and be read and validated in the future, governments must address issues such as media instability and deterioration; obsolescence and incompatibility of hardware, software, data formats or storage media; lack of metadata or contextual information (which makes it difficult to access the information or use it meaningfully); and lack of clearly assigned responsibilities and resources for long-term preservation.

Technologies and products for managing e-records and digital information are emerging. These are variously termed Records Management Application (RMA) software, Electronic Document

and Records Management (EDRM) systems, Enterprise Content Management (ECM) systems or Information Lifecycle Management (ILM) systems. Governments need to adopt or develop record keeping standards and requirements for evaluating these products as well as all ICT systems. The European Commission's Model Requirements for the Management of Electronic Records is an example of functional requirements for electronic record keeping technologies.

Existing technologies provide a foundation on which to build e-records and digital information management solutions, but there is no product that addresses all of the requirements for e-records authenticity and the inevitable obsolescence of the various layers of technology (ie data, software, hardware, storage media). Organisations therefore must develop the capacity to implement and maintain flexible technical architectures. This will require support for information management policies and procedures, education for records managers and ICT staff and training for end-users. The 13 case studies carried out through the Evidence-Based Governance Project provided little evidence of a systematic approach to managing records in the transition to the electronic environment.

Issues for Legal and Judicial Reform

Growing emphasis on transparency and the need to reduce large backlogs of court cases has led to case management reforms and greatly increased use of court technology and electronic filing. This has highlighted the need for the effective management of case files and other court records. Well-managed court records are fundamental to the efficient and effective operation of legal systems. They are the means by which citizens and organisations are able to enforce their rights, and they support accountability by making the judiciary more transparent. If the record of judicial rulings is accurate and readily accessible, the potential for illicit manipulation resulting from delays, corruption and inaccuracies, is reduced.

Dysfunctional records management systems undermine legal and judicial reform initiatives. Decisions are made in the absence of full information about a case, and the absence of systematic record keeping and controls leaves scope for corruption or collusion between court officials and lawyers. Court time is wasted, delays are created and the judiciary's standing is lowered. The large volume of records passing through a typical legal organisation, their sensitivity, and time pressures on courts make records management essential. Three of the case studies can be cited to illustrate the records management issues for legal and judicial reform.

In Ecuador, poor records management is recognised as a key issue undermining court performance; huge accumulations of poorly managed files have contributed to inefficiency and wasted resources. A reform programme commencing in 1996 has introduced guidelines for managing records at every state of the life cycle, while the establishment of electronic networks has facilitated shared information about the status of cases and reporting statistics. The case management system and requests for information now are handled more efficiently. However, sustainability may be an issue as there are no professionally trained records managers in the judiciary, and the National Archives does not play a significant role in managing legal records. The legal admissibility of electronic records and long-term record keeping requirements for electronic records still need to be addressed.

Transforming the justice system is one of the greatest challenges facing South Africa. An integrated justice system is being developed, and records management is seen as an integral part of the management of court business; the National Archives, which has statutory responsibility for oversight of records management, is involved in defining records management controls, although this is difficult to given the level of resources. These responsibilities are beginning to be translated into the electronic environment, but systems are not yet in place to ensure that electronic records will survive intact and that vital metadata that gives records context and format is captured and preserved.

In 1990, Singapore embarked upon a set of reforms that have transformed its legal system into an example of efficiency and the effective use of technology. As part of the effort to tackle case backlogs, an electronic filing system was introduced to make case management information and court records available to judges, court personnel and lawyers. Policies and procedures have been established for the creating, maintaining, preserving and disposing of electronic records. Electronic records are accepted as legal evidence and are transferred to the National Archives in original electronic form. The Archives outputs the electronic records to microfilm as an effective, low cost means of preservation, but any interactive functionality is lost.

Issues for Financial Management Reform

The integrity of financial systems is fundamental to effective governance; reliable, timely and readily accessible financial records should provide evidence that resources have been received, committed or spent so that accountants can prepare meaningful financial reports for public scrutiny and external auditors can assure the public that the reports are credible. Weak financial records systems result in vast quantities of financial records being kept longer than necessary, while essential records are hard to find. The result can be high levels of unvouched expenditure and unresolved audit queries, with opportunities for fraud, corruption in procurement and money laundering. Difficulties in locating source documents to track HIPIC expenditures or to meet EC compliance tests point to evidentiary problems.

Functional requirements for capturing and preserving digital records over time need to be integrated into Financial Management Information Systems to support system integrity. Otherwise, governments, donors and lenders face unnecessarily high risks for the significant investments that lenders and donors make in the procurement and implementation of FMIS/IFMIS software. Again, three of the case studies provide examples of the records management issues that need to be addressed to support financial management reform.

Vietnam has made good progress in strengthening financial management but has not yet tackled the issue of managing financial records. The National Archives plays virtually no role in current records management. The Ministry of Finance issues clear guidance on what records should be kept, for how long and in what condition. This helps ensure that financial records can be readily accessed during audits, but regulations permitting the destruction of financial records are often not applied, and inactive records are beginning to build up in creating agencies, creating storage and retrieval problems. Computerisation is widespread in government departments, and an

IFMS has been proposed, but Vietnam has not yet developed the capacity to manage electronic records.

Financial reforms have been underway in Tanzania since 1992. The Controller and Accountant General has repeatedly stressed the need to drastically reduce the level of vouched expenditure to demonstrate accountability for public funds. Large parts of the financial management system continue to be paper-based, but the Government is progressively computerising aspects of the financial management function, and an IFMIS has been introduced to strengthen expenditure management; however, the link between paper and electronic records has not been defined. Tanzania's successful records management reforms have been led by the Records and Archives Management Department, which is planning financial and electronic records management projects.

Chile, a pioneer in electronic government, is introducing a substantial program to modernise the management of public sector finances, including the introduction of a modern and integrated financial management and resource allocation system. This will have major implications for financial records management. As preparation for a paperless work environment, legislation has been passed regarding electronic documents and the certification of electronic signatures. Questions remain about the legal admissibility of electronic records and the lack of a strategy for managing and preserving electronic records over time present risks for long-term integrity and access. The National Archives has statutory power for managing public records but is not viewed as having a pivotal role in electronic government.

Issues for Assessing Records Management Capacity

Two new tools make it possible, for the first time, to measure and monitor records management infrastructure and capacity and thus enable task teams to strengthen data integrity. A high-level *E-Records Readiness Tool*, designed, in partnership between the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the International Records Management Trust, can be used in conjunction with existing e-government readiness tools to assess the infrastructure and capacity needed to manage records and information. The Tool is a brief questionnaire that provides a risk assessment of e-records readiness both at the national level and at the agency-specific level. Where problems are identified that require further analysis, the Trust offers *Records Management Capacity Assessment System (RMCAS)* software to help conduct a more in-depth evaluation.

RMCAS, developed in partnership between the Trust and the World Bank (Development Grant Facility and Governance Knowledge Sharing Program) is mapped against the ISO Records Management Standard. By gathering and analysing information from users and creators of records, it diagnoses records management capacity on a scale of 0-5 and provides an automated link to a database of appropriate training materials. As an example, in the legal and judicial reform area, the tool asks:

Are new cases always registered or captured in a record keeping system as soon as the first document is received? Countries (or government agencies) will score Level 2 capacity if all new

cases are registered or captured in the record-keeping system as soon as the first document relating to the case is received.

As an example, in the financial management area, the tool asks:

Are loan agreement data entered into the system immediately after agreements are signed?

Level 2 capacity is achieved if responsibilities are clearly specified for maintaining debt management records and for compliance with debt management recordkeeping requirements.

These tools, developed and tested in cooperation with developing countries, should support operational work by helping to ensure that records are managed effectively to support transparency and integrity as part of the reform process. They are available free of charge. See www.irmt.org.

This note was written by Anne Thurston, Director of the International Records Management Trust and of the Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age Project

**Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age -
A World Bank Partnership Programme**

Documents, other materials and presentations

1. EBG Development Grant Facility

Annual Report 1 July to 30 June 2002	EBG/DGF/1
Annual Report 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003	EBG/DGF/2
Legal and Judicial Records and Information Systems in The Gambia Case Study December 2001	EBG/DGF/3
Personnel and Payroll Records and Information Systems in Burkina Faso, Case Study April 2002	EBG/DGF/4
Legal and Judicial records and Information Systems in Singapore, Case Study April 2002	EBG/DGF/5
Legal and Judicial Records and Information Systems in Ecuador, Case Study April 2002	EBG/DGF/6
Legal and Judicial Records and Information Systems in South Africa, Case Study July 2002	EBG/DGF/7
Legal and Judicial Records and Information Systems in Argentina, Case Study April 2002	EBG/DGF/8
Personnel and Payroll Records and Information Systems in Chile, Case Study May 2002	EBG/DGF/9
Personnel and Payroll Records and Information Systems in Tanzania, Case Study May 2002	EBG/DGF/10
Financial Records Systems in Nigeria, Case Study April 2002	EBG/DGF/11
Management of Financial Records in Chile, Case Study May 2002	EBG/DGF/12
Financial Records and Information Systems in Tanzania, Case Study May 2002	EBG/DGF/13
The Management of Financial Records in Vietnam, Case Study June 2002	EBG/DGF/14
Personnel Information and Civil Service Establishment Controls in Uttar Pradesh, Case Study January/February 2002	EBG/DGF/15
Legal and Judicial Records and Information Systems Assessment Tool, April 2003	EBG/DGF/16
Financial Records and Information Systems Assessment Tool, April 2003	EBG/DGF/17
Human Resources Management Records and Information Systems Assessment Tool	EBG/DGF/18
Generic Assessment Tool for Records and Information Systems, April 2003	EBG/DGF/19
Financial Records and Information Systems of Department of the Accountant General, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Botswana, Test Assessment April 2003	EBG/DGF/20

Financial Records and Information Systems of Department of the Accountant General, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Botswana, Test Assessment August 2003	EBG/DGF/21
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3. EBG DFID and Commonwealth Secretariat

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