

GLOBAL FIELD SUPPORT STRATEGY 2010-15

Overview of Context, Objectives, Results and Lessons Learned



GLOBAL FIELD SUPPORT

Looking Back at the Department of Field Support's First Strategy: Results and Lessons Learned

The Global Field Support Strategy (GFSS) was a 5-year agenda to help the United Nations reshape and strengthen its support to peacekeeping, special political and other field operations. This document provides an overview of the GFSS – its context, goals, objectives, and key results. Drawing lessons from this first strategy is important for the Department of Field Support (DFS). Confronting a challenging future, the Department will need to consolidate its achievements, and further refine its approaches as field operations grow in scale, complexity and cost. For DFS, strong performance will matter more than ever.

CONTEXT

When DFS began to design the GFSS in 2009, the Department was still in a formative phase. Established only two years before, it had not yet fully articulated its organizational identity, direction and structure. Following its separation from DPKO in July 2007, immediate operational tasks forced DFS to postpone organizational development. New missions in Darfur, Chad and Somalia had increased the size of its field operations by 50 percent within two years. Initially, the Department's energy was consumed with tackling this rapid growth. When DFS presented the GFSS in January 2010 (A/64/660), the strategy was meant to perform two functions: help to develop organizational foundations and strengthen the Department's capacity to systematically manage its growing operations.

STRATEGIC GOAL

The overall goal of the GFSS was to transform service delivery to field missions. By June 2015, the Department intended to improve its capacity to offer timely, high-quality and cost-efficient services, and to adapt flexibly to the expansion or contraction of the mission portfolio it supports.

CHALLENGES

When designing the GFSS, DFS had identified critical challenges that triggered the need for change in services delivery, including:

- **Broad mandates** for missions that often did not fully consider the support needs for more difficult operating environments;
- **Impediments to rapid funding** for new missions;
- **Shortcomings in resource optimization**, due to a historical focus on individual missions rather than on a global portfolio;
- **Inadequate capacity to deploy peacekeepers**, from force generation, to reimbursements, movement and infrastructure;
- **Limited ability to rapidly procure** material resources;
- **High vacancy rates and turn-over** among civilian staff;
- **Growing security and safety risks** in volatile environments;

CORE OBJECTIVES

In pursuit of its strategic goal, the GFSS set out core objectives:

- 1 **To accelerate and improve support** to peacekeeping, special political and other missions;
- 2 **To strengthen resource accountability**, while pursuing **efficiencies** and **economies of scale**;
- 3 **To improve safety and quality of life** for field mission staff;

The strategy was also aimed at making better use of regional and local capacity, and reducing the environmental impact of field missions.

NEW SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

A key characteristic of the GFSS was a new organizational structure, or service delivery model, that would refashion the division of labour between headquarters, new service centres and field missions to improve DFS' ability to respond to changes in mission needs and size. Headquarters would continue to set strategic direction, define policy and exercise oversight, but largely from exit operational and transactional services. Service centres would take over the majority of these functions. The support component of missions would thus focus on location-dependent work.

PILLARS

To translate the GFSS into sets of concrete action, DFS formulated four pillars around which teams, task forces and working groups collaborated to drive change:

-  **A strategic resourcing and financing pillar** to strengthen the tools for early financing of missions and to improve efficient and effective stewardship of resources;
-  **A human resources pillar** to address the challenges of recruiting, retaining and managing the necessary talent and to improve conditions of service in the field;
-  **A shared services pillar** for the provision of remote support to missions, including from the global and regional service centres;
-  **A supply chain and modularization pillar** to improve asset sourcing, distribution and management, and improve the tools for deploying camps and infrastructure;

Oversight bodies of the General Assembly considered annual progress for the GFSS. Internal and external auditors conducted regular reviews. A small team in the Office of the Under-Secretary General, Management Support, provided oversight and coordination for the GFSS.

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

The critical challenges identified in 2010 proved accurate, even if DFS did not fully anticipate their extent. Ever larger deployments, challenges and crises have validated the need for change. They also complicated reform, however, as DFS at times struggled to respond to operational needs while also pursuing strategic change.

GROWING DEPLOYMENTS

Field deployments continued to grow during the implementation of the GFSS. In 2014/15, including UNSOA/AMISOM, DFS is tasked to support 175,000 authorized personnel, a 14 per cent increase from 2009/10. A dozen field missions have been established since 2010 and operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and South Sudan were extensively reconfigured following crises.

COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTS

Further complicating the challenge, more personnel have been deployed to remote locations. Nearly 60 percent of peacekeeping personnel are now in land-locked or hard-to-reach environments. Four of the five most recent peacekeeping missions have supply lines of at least 1,500 kilometres from their main base to the nearest port. Within countries, these lines often extend farther. In Mali, for example, supply convoys must cover 1,700 kilometres in-country, mostly on unpaved roads and under frequent threat of attack.

DETERIORATING SECURITY

Security conditions for field missions have deteriorated, especially in recent years. In December 2011, 25 percent of the area covered by peacekeeping operations was assessed as substantially, highly or extremely dangerous. By July 2014, this share had grown to 42 per cent, often due to targeted and asymmetric threats. Insecurity for special political missions has been extremely challenging and fluid, especially in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Somalia and Yemen.

FINANCIAL STRAIN

Worsening fiscal conditions impacted the GFSS from the outset, both increasing the pressure to reform and limiting the scope for investments in change. The financial crisis, which erupted in 2008/09, created fiscal distress among major financial contributors, as public deficits plunged and debt levels rose. As a result, financial accountability, cost-efficiency and economies of scale became a key focus during the GFSS implementation.

RESULTS

For DFS, the GFSS served as a framework for delivering change during a period of intensive growth in the scale and complexity of field operations. While progress has not been even, today's field support operations are more cost-effective, leaner and faster than five years ago. The Department has also gained in capacity and uses a stronger service delivery model. DFS has innovated and developed a more client, performance and change-orientated organizational culture.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Key DFS achievements, attributable to a sustained focus on the objectives laid out under the GFSS, include:

Start-up budget planning and delivery has improved. For the three peacekeeping missions set up between 2010/11 and 2013/14 (UNISFA, UNMISS, MINUSMA) only 1.6 per cent of funds apportioned during the first 2 years of deployment went unspent. In the previous start-up cluster, nearly 7.3 per cent of apportioned funds (\$275 million) were left unused. The standard funding model, a tool which DFS developed and refines, contributed to this improvement;

New missions can now mobilize resources faster. Newly established operations can now immediately draw on an expanded commitment authority of \$100m and strategic deployment stocks of \$50m (deferred financing). Infrastructure works can be accelerated through modular camp designs and support teams deployed from the Global Service Centre. There are still, however, significant constraints to mobilizing enabling capacities for mission start-ups.

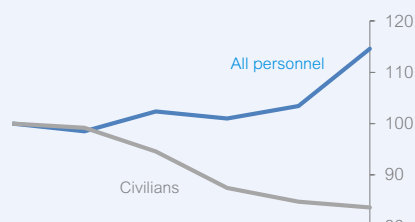
Field support is leaner. In 2010/11, peacekeeping missions on average fielded 136 support and security staff for every 1,000 mission personnel. By 2014/15, this ratio had fallen by 22 per cent to less than 106. Including UNSOA/AMISOM, the ratio dropped 16 per cent over the period, from 130 to about 95. Near than 4,000 positions in support components have been abolished to drive this improvement.

Field support operations are more cost-effective. Since 2008/09, the cost per deployed uniformed personnel has fallen by 10 percent in nominal terms and 17 percent in real terms, when adjusted for inflation. Much of the improvement is thanks to efficiencies in operations. In 2009/10, for example, the operations budget for peacekeeping amounted to \$2.52 billion, in support of 113,600 authorized uniformed personnel. In 2013/14, the budget was 10 per cent or \$250 million lower for the same number of uniformed UN personnel.

TRENDS IN OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

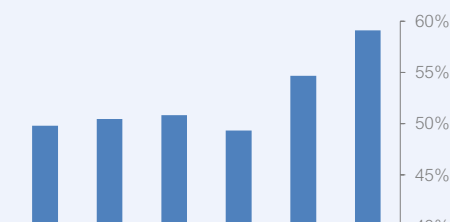
Change in supported personnel

All personnel and civilians only (2009/10=100)



Change in complex logistics environments

Personnel in land-locked / hard to reach locations



Change in security levels

Ops area substantially, highly or extremely dangerous



RESOURCES**\$150m**

quick resources for new missions

SUPPORT RATIO**-22%**

fewer support staff per 1,000 personnel

COST**-17%**

lower real cost per uniformed personnel

VACANCIES**-1/4**

lower vacancy rates for civilian posts

SHARED SERVICES**72%**

personnel in shared service arrangements

SATISFACTION**57%**

clients satisfied with service quality

Civilian vacancy and turnover rates have fallen. Since January 2010, the vacancy rate among international and national personnel in all field missions has fallen by a quarter, from more than 20 per cent to 15 per cent as of August 2014. Similarly, turnover rates among international staff have fallen by a third, from 11 per cent in 2009/10 to 7.7 per cent in 2013/14.

Shared services are creating economies of scale. In 2014/15, more than 70 per cent of authorized mission personnel will receive support from a remote service provider. The pooling of clients and resources enables DFS to deploy significantly fewer service staff per client than in missions without shared services. New missions joining a shared service centre are able to quickly leverage its capacity. In addition, staff in service centres benefit from less dangerous and more family friendly environments.

Client satisfaction is measured more systematically. DFS now tracks customer satisfaction across a range of services and providers. As of April 2015, 57 per cent of all personnel were satisfied or highly satisfied with the quality of DFS services, according to a global survey, whereas only 18 per cent expressed dissatisfaction. Most respondents also acknowledged improvements over the past 5 years. DFS service centres also routinely survey customer satisfaction to help target improvements.

Over the course of five years, and against a difficult operational backdrop, DFS has worked with many stakeholders to implement a new service delivery model and support tools that have enabled the improvements in performance and strengthened capacity.

NEW FIELD SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

The new field support service delivery model prioritizes functional specialization at each level of the organization, with different entities operating as a part of a global system, allowing for greater concentration of expertise and consistency of performance:

- **Strategic oversight, planning and partnership functions** are performed by Headquarters;
- **Global operational functions** are performed by the Global Service Centre and at Headquarters (for cases where close Member States interaction is required);

- **Shared services** can cover a range of solutions, including administrative and transactional support for: HR, finance, ICT, logistics cooperation among missions, and other tasks that are non-location dependent;

- **In-mission functions**, which are location-dependent, are delivered by mission support components in the field.

The introduction of the new field service delivery model has been a complex, challenging and sometimes frustrating project for the Department and its clients. Adjustments were required along the way, and some of the benefits did not materialize early or fully. Yet today, DFS HQ are significantly leaner than in 2009/10 and more focused on strategy. HQ and mission functions have been transferred to shared service providers. Various shared service arrangements now support 72 per cent of client personnel. They deliver financial and non-financial benefits. After significant early challenges, particularly in the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, their performance is showing sustained improvement.

NEW TOOLS AND APPROACHES

Alongside a new service delivery model, DFS has introduced new and improved tools for launching new missions and supporting them throughout their lifecycle (see overleaf). They have strengthened the Department's capacity and are being mainstreamed in its work. For the latest mission start-up, MINUSCA, DFS applied the full set of tools for the first time with good results (see overleaf).

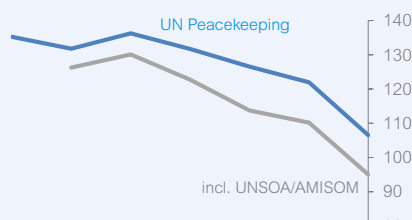
LESSONS LEARNED

Along with achievements, DFS encountered a number of challenges and learned important lessons during the implementation of GFSS. They have inspired refined approaches and strengthened the Department's commitment to continuous improvement.

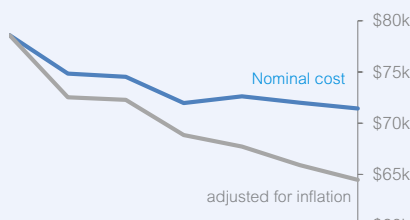
Global and strategic management is vital. Since the launch of the GFSS, DFS' portfolio has grown to 37 peacekeeping, special political and other missions with a combined budget of \$9.3 billion and 175,000 authorized personnel. Running such a portfolio successfully requires even stronger direction, performance and control. Global and strategic management will be vital beyond the GFSS.

TRENDS IN SUPPORT EFFICIENCY**Leaner support components**

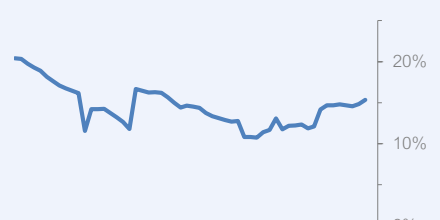
Support / security per 1,000 mission personnel

**Lower cost per peacekeeper**

Cost per deployed uniformed personnel

**Lower vacancy rates**

Share of vacant int'l and nat'l civilian posts



Direct stakeholder engagement is essential. The GFSS highlighted the importance of support services for the success of United Nations field operations, and - for the first time - created direct, systematic and strategic dialogue between DFS and its stakeholders. Engagement around the GFSS has been important in shaping the Department's direction, change initiatives and performance. It will be important to maintain it.

Operational tempo impacts the capacity for change. The continued surge in field operations affected the Department's management capacity. At times, in the face of operational demands, resources available for planning, implementing and coordinating change were insufficient. This slowed down several GFSS initiatives, particularly supply chain management and shared services. For DFS as a whole, keeping a strong focus on strategic direction, management and control will remain a constant challenge in the future.

Strategy should focus on performance rather than projects. When the GFSS was designed, a key intention was to articulate a vision, strategic agenda and change process for improving the performance of field services. During its implementation, however, stakeholders (and staff) often associated the GFSS with specific projects only, such as modularization or service centres. To ensure strategy remains relevant for all, future approaches must prioritize the use of a balanced set of performance indicators that resonates with the demands of its diverse stakeholders and drives results.

Shared services are a complex management challenge. Establishing shared service delivery, in particular from the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe (RSCE), was challenging for DFS and its clients. Workloads surged quickly, staff transfers to centres were delayed, work processes had to be reengineered, budgeting for centres proved cumbersome, and parallel corporate reforms overwhelmed capacity. As a result, performance and client satisfaction plunged. Since mid-2014, shared services are showing sustained improvement. The main challenge now is to expand them to all missions, simplify budgeting, ensure centres scale with their workload, and deliver on cost and performance targets.

Performance measurement and control matter. Prior to 2010, performance measurements were not collected systematically across missions. Key performance indicators were introduced progressively under the GFSS, but quantifying benefits proved challenging due to the lack of systematic baselines, benchmarks and data. Moving forward, DFS will need to enhance its business intelligence and analytics abilities to better measure, understand and control performance.

BEYOND THE GFSS

Beyond the June 2015, the case for a global, strategic, innovative approach to service delivery remains very strong as the scale, complexity and cost of field missions expands. DFS is fully committed to ensuring that field support efficiently and effectively enables mandates delivery.

Looking to the future, DFS must be responsive to the expectations of its stakeholders, who want services that are: (a) fast and flexible; (b) consistent and of high quality; (c) cost efficient and effective; and (d) accountable and transparent. Future improvements must balance these core demands

THE GFSS AND MINUSCA

In 2014, DFS used its new service delivery model and tools to start up the UN Integrated Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) including:

- Expanded financial commitment authority of \$59.5 million and strategic deployment stocks of \$34 million
- Modular camp and base designs produced at UNLB and 11 types of modules deployed
- Innovative approaches to enable deployment, including a combination of commercial and turnkey camps provided by Member States, contractors and UNOPS
- Support from the RSCE from day one, avoiding in-country costs and delays arising from recruitment of admin personnel
- Expansion of the integrated regional flight schedule to incorporate Bangui, avoiding the positioning of additional aircraft
- 12 mission support teams deployed from GSC, including support for communications, engineering, warehousing, property management, receipt and inspection
- Surplus assets sourced and deployed from regional missions, reducing cost and accelerating deployment
- Information and communications technology services were provided the RSCE and GSC
- Expansion of regional contracts managed by nearby missions and the regional procurement office to rapidly deliver services
- Use of long-term global charter aircraft to deploy troops, police and enablers, incl. an aviation unit and hospital.

Working with partners in the Secretariat, the Department of Field Support will continue its strategic dialogue with the General Assembly and other stakeholder to define strategic direction and priorities.

It is clear from today's challenges that field support practitioners will need to continue to: (a) enable operations in remote, dangerous environments; (b) strengthen collaboration with troop-and police-contributors; (c) continue to improve the quality of service delivery; (d) exercise prudence with limited resources; and (e) help ensure that Secretariat-wide reforms will work well in, and for, the field.

In the short term, DFS intends to pursue improvements that follow naturally from the activities launched under the strategy including expanding shared services, implementing the supply chain management strategy, strengthening enabling capacities, reinforcing business analytics and intelligence, and facilitating Secretariat-wide reform such as IPSAS, Umoja and mobility;

In the long-term, DFS will continue to build a professional field support service that is highly responsive to clients, customers and partners. Although field support services cannot always meet all expectations, DFS is committed to show real and balanced commitment to those who set mandates, provide resources or partner with

NEW FIELD SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

| Functions | Services | Location |
|---|---|--|
|  Strategic Direction and Oversight Functions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic direction • Policy and guidance development • Standards and systems standardization • New mission planning • Oversight and compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance • Senior leadership appointments • Field capacity-building • Field advocacy in policy decisions • Member State interaction. |
|  Global Operational Support Functions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global system contracts management • Global acquisition planning • Field Technology Operational Centre • Strategic stocks / reserve management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic movement planning / monitoring • Member State operational interaction • Uniformed personnel movements • Field roster management |
|  Cross-Mission Support for Non-Location-Dependent Functions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transactional services, in particular standard human resources and finance services • Information and technology services • Logistics cooperation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Service Centres • Structured Inter-Mission Support Arrangements |
|  Location-Dependent In-Mission Functions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice to mission leadership • Facilities / infrastructure management • GIS and ICT solutions and services • Medical / occup. health & safety services • Environment management • Welfare • Risk and compliance • Audit • In-mission transport • Troop/unit rotation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingent-owned equipment inspection • Asset management (through life cycle) • Life support provision and supplies • Recruitment • Post management • Workforce planning • Staff advisory functions • Training • Budget development and execution • Trust fund management |

NEW TOOLS AND APPROACHES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
|  | Access to expanded, early financing and start-up resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded commitment authority of \$100 million for new missions • Immediate access to strategic deployment stocks up to \$50 million • Refined model for budgeting new missions (standard funding model) |
| | Cost-efficiency measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource efficiency reviews and improved budgeting, leading to sustained cost-reductions and -avoidance • Right-sizing of strategic deployment stocks holdings to support a \$50 million cost reduction |
|  | Recruitment and workforce planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardized staff rosters which now serve for 90 percent of recruitments • Regular workforce planning exercises, including 9 civilian staffing reviews in 2 years |
| | Safety and quality of life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of family duty stations thanks to shared service locations • Stronger occupational health and safety policy and processes |
|  | Shared services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative transactional support from several shared service providers, including the Regional Service Centre serving more than 60 percent of civilian clients • Shared transport arrangements among East Africa missions, covering air assets, troop rotations and regional commercial contracts • Consolidated global remote geospatial, information and communications technology services • Lighter in-mission support footprints in insecure and high-cost operating environments |
|  | Supply and asset management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply chain management strategy and road map developed with four implementation projects • Strengthened performance framework for managing asset holding worth \$2.6 billion • Central clearing house facility at the Global Service Centre to improve asset utilization |
| | Innovative contracting methodologies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New global turn-key arrangements for fuel supplies worth more than \$500m per year • New contract arrangements to improve the quality of rations worth more than \$300m per year • New global systems contract for deployment and rotation of 300,000 uniformed personnel per year • Regional systems contract for commercial logistics services in East Africa |
| | Access to early enabling capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New delegated authority to use United Nations Office for Project Services for enabling services • Pilot initiatives with Member States and commercial enablers for turn-key camp infrastructure • Mission support teams for surge capacity during start-up, restructuring, transition and liquidation |
| | Modularization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardized modular designs for mission camps, including fortified structures • Engineering design team to provide tailored mission infrastructure designs |

