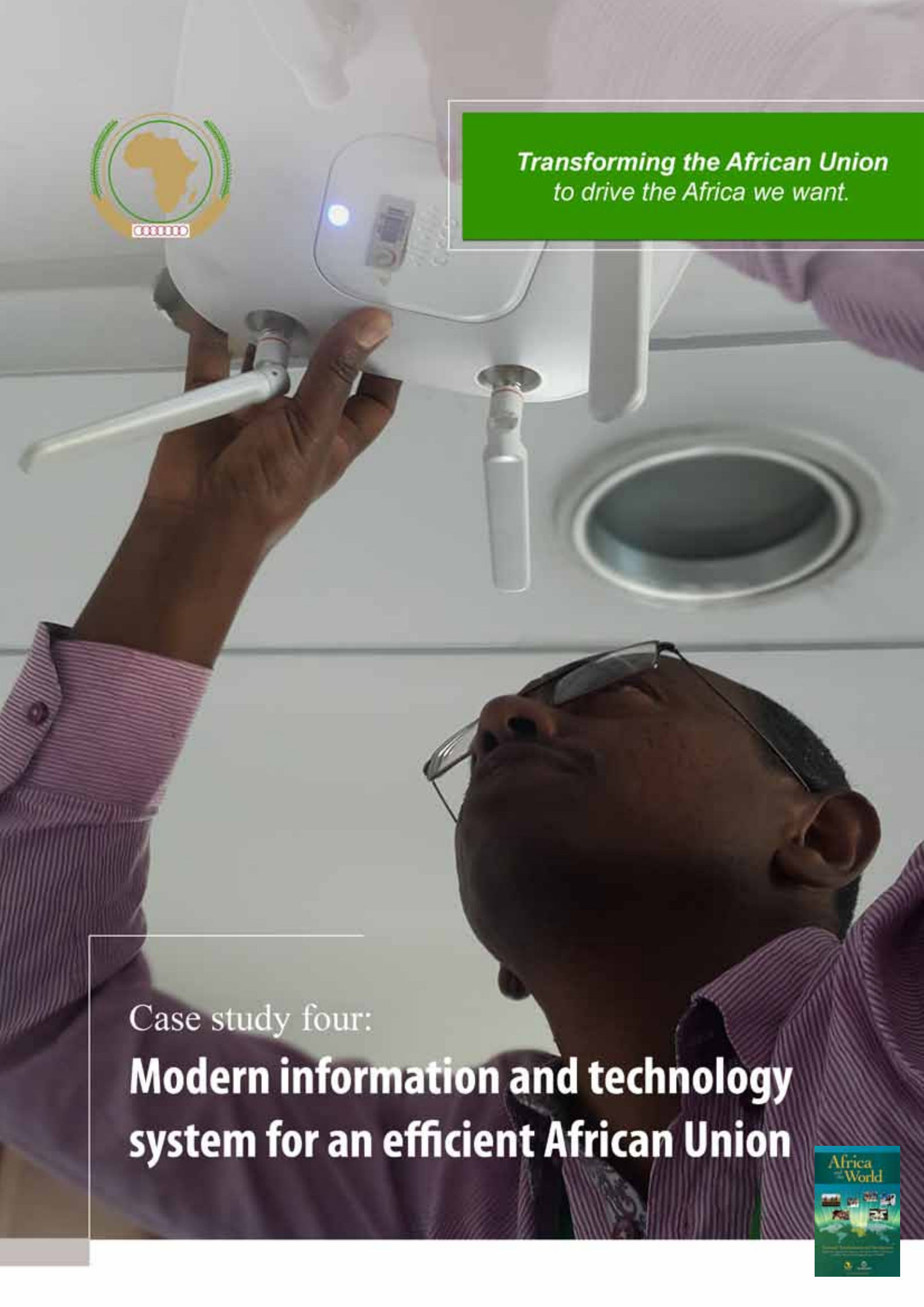

Transforming the African Union
to drive the Africa we want.

Case study four:

Modern information and technology system for an efficient African Union

CONTENT

EDITORIAL

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The African Union has embarked on a transformation journey for the successful implementation of Agenda 2063. We mapped out our flagship projects and initiatives across the continent and at the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), with an aim to highlight the priority areas in the Agenda 2063 Framework and its first Ten Year Implementation Plan, for strategic execution. This calls for the need for the African Union to review its overall structure and equip its leaders with the relevant set of skills to achieve the ambitious goals captured in the Pan-African agenda.

Information and Communications Technology is a vital and integral part of the African Union and has provided leverage in both the management and the economic aspects of the institution. Effective management and proper use of these ICT tools has been effective in the turnaround of the African Union into an efficient, transparent institution. In this regard, specific progressive actions have been undertaken since 2014.

Fostering technological change and rallying for an intense adaptation and use of technologies; from the provision of more efficient IT infrastructure, IT systems, IT networking and programs' standardization, has enabled the AU to remain globally competitive and in line with the International best practices. This publication primarily aims at providing an overview of the successes of prudent the use of ICT. It also informs on the steps we should take to advance the use of technology to facilitate our ability to be innovative to make our vision a reality.

The African Union has renewed its information technology materials: more than

2,400

new computers

were made available to the staff in 2016

24 **AU offices and RECs**

are now interconnected with the Commission Headquarter

With its new computer system for conference management, the African Union has made

a saving of over

600,000 USD

the past six months

New information and technology equipment

The African Union believes that ICT should be leveraged as a tool that will enable the Institutional change in achieving its new strategies and directions. That is why, since 2014, a number of reforms were undertaken in the area.

The objectives of this transformation are to enable transformational change, be efficient as well as cost effective, ensure information security and enhance transparency as well as organizational effectiveness.

A new Information and Technology park:

To improve its effectiveness, the African Union Commission purchased new equipment. **More than 2400 computers** were replaced with the latest generation machines. These faster and easily transportable tools will help reduce the time spent in delivering services.

More efficient data center:

The African Union finally uses its own data center after 53 years of existence. The benefits of centralizing the servers internally has numerous benefits.

As regards **security**, the African Union is now master of its servers, paving the way for enhanced data protection.

Regarding **reactivity and efficiency,** through the management of its servers, the African Union is more reactive in answering requests for the provision of space or maintenance. Thanks to this centralized service, external services are no longer needed and large movements can be avoided.

In addition, the data center helped significantly **reduce the cost** of managing and maintaining servers is . Formerly, for example, air conditioning system had to be used for each server. Now, only a single one is needed throughout the hosting space thanks to the centralization of servers.

Finally, our **spaces are used more efficiently.** Previously, some free space in the servers could not be used because it was too small to hold the data we would like to insert. Today these small free spaces are put together and allows us to have more options in hosting our data.

Modern conference center

To better manage conferences, the African Union adopted the **Blue Jeans platform,** one of the latest and most effective solutions for video conferencing. In addition to the quality of pictures and sound received, the platform has the advantage of being accessible anywhere.

Participants in the conference rooms also have at their disposal a powerful computer equipment. More than **1,000 seats are equipped with touchscreen computers** so participants can access and share information more easily.

Moreover, a platform for information exchange has also been set up to facilitate information flow during conferences. Several thousands documents shared during the past 53 years are available on this sharing tool.

Better inter-connectivity

To facilitate communication and collaboration, efforts were made towards interconnecting the Commission and the organs of the African Union. Today, **24 AU offices and RECs** all over the world can call, video conference and get access to real-time data through the network.

IT service of proximity

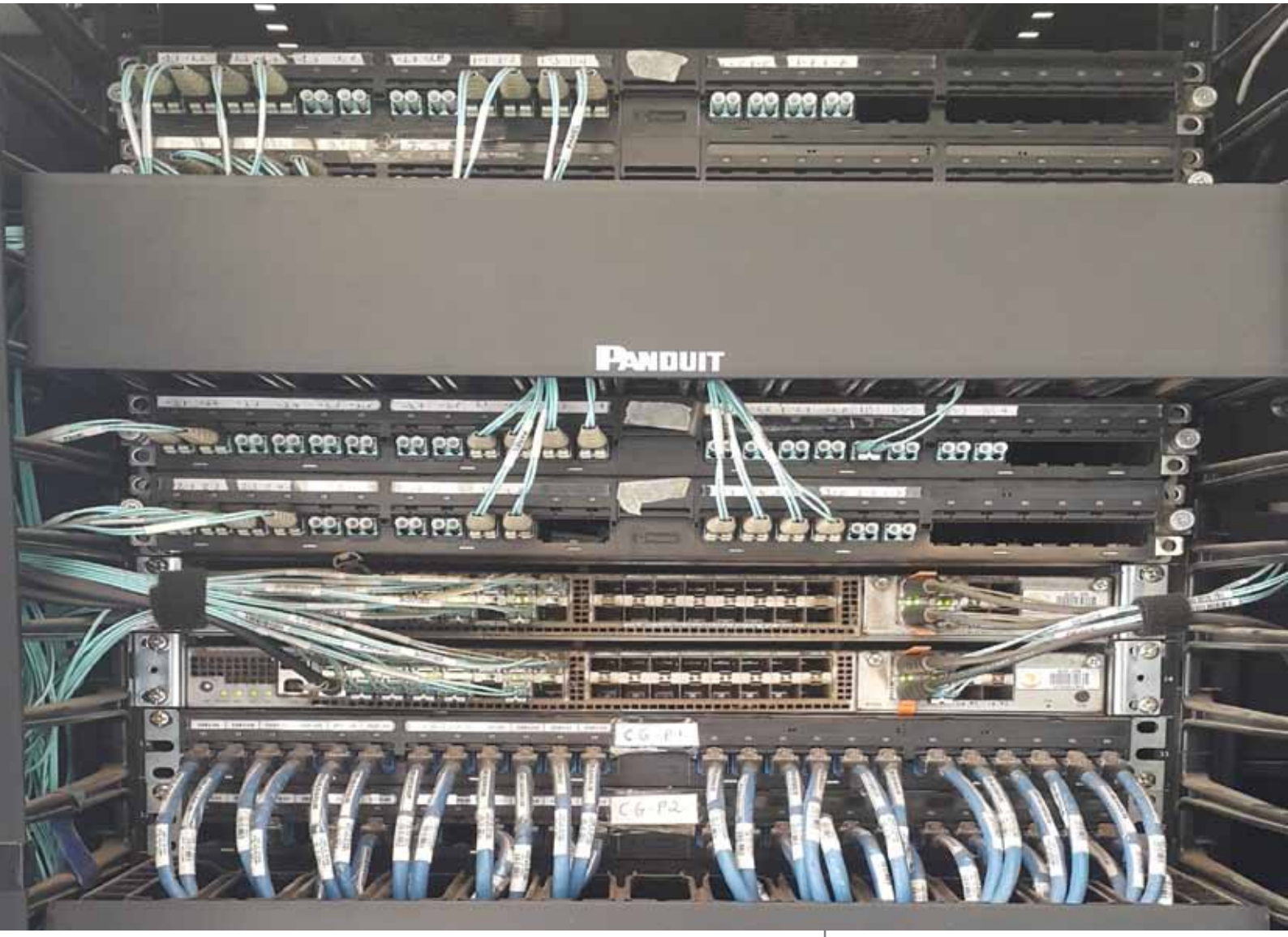
In 2015, more than **8,600 information technology maintenances or installations** occurred within the African Union. To better meet this need, processes and procedures to meet the IT User needs have been reviewed. A help desk was also set up for efficient service.

Centralized and more robust system for users

For more efficient use of our equipment, efforts have also been made to provide centralized and more robust services to the employees. Accordingly, centralized printers and UPS have been put in place in the offices of the African Union.

This centralization means that the Union has printing equipment for large volume of work and more robust UPS, ensuring that power cuts are avoided.

To ensure sustainability, technical staff was also trained to properly manage and maintain this equipment.



Refurbished infrastructure of the organs

Improvements in IT systems are also implemented in AU organs. As an example the network and the computer hardware in the Arusha court was entirely renewed. This activity took three months of work.

Revamped applications

In use within the African Union since 2009, SAP has been revisited to facilitate information flows, improve efficiency and promote greater transparency. Various consultations have been carried out to review the System in order to harmonize data migration and explore the possibility of establishing e-procurement and e-recruitment services.

At present, the system is used by AU for the following purposes:

- Material Management: running procurement and inventory functions
- Financial Accounting and Controlling: financial management control
- Fund management and financial reporting
- Human Capital Management: administration of the Human resources' hire to retire process
- Travel Management: control of employees and non-staff travel requests and settlement
- Employees Self Services that allows employees to update and view their own data, such as viewing remuneration statements, creation of leave of absence, Travel Request and Appraisal and Manager Self Service that allow managers to update, approve and view reports of their subordinates.

New information technology strategy

Based on a proposed business model for Information Technology, a conceptual architecture and a gap analysis, an IT strategy was developped for the African Union for it to reach the objectives of the Agenda 2063. This strategy proposes five (5) key activities wich are describe after.

ICT Capability, Capacity and Change Management

MIS will maintain a 'run' capacity and will have to capacitate accordingly. The 'plan' and 'build' capacities will be sourced from strategic IT partners and the rules of engagement will have to be defined as part of the sourcing strategy for MIS. The sourcing strategy will define the framework for IT service sourcing and the terms of engagement.

| It is also imperative that the MIS division is reconstituted to include all IT service areas of the organisation and be positioned as a self-contained directorate as per the proposed IT business model. |

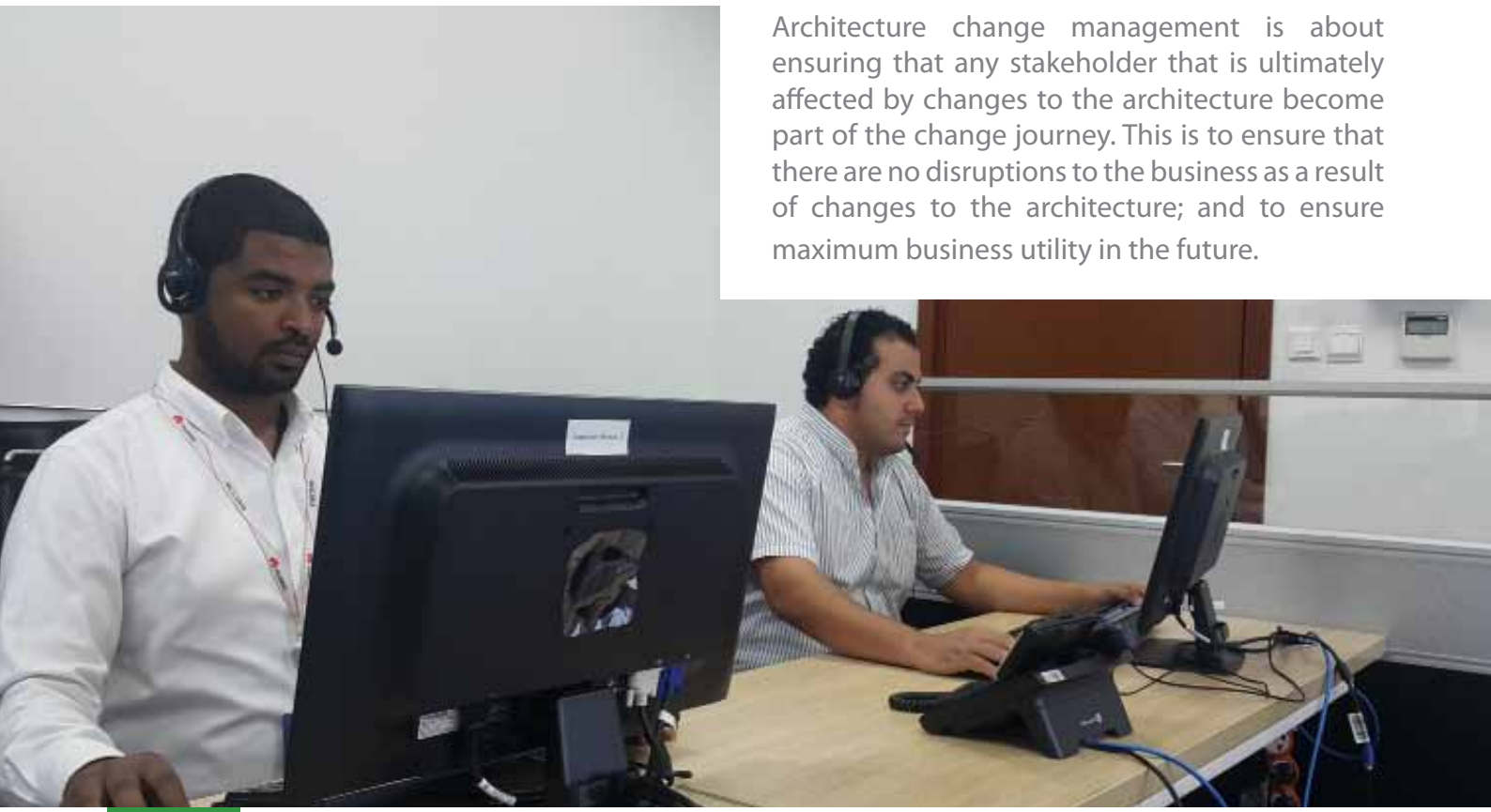
Entrenching a process culture will be key to laying the foundation for the IT strategy. IT needs to support the business and the business is articulated through processes. Due consideration and participation in process design, modelling, implementation, monitoring and improvement will be a key competency to provide downstream requirements for system design and implementation.

| The capacitation of the MIS division will require a skills assessment across all the IT competencies within the African Union organs; and to develop a skills plan based on the new IT business model. |

The current ITIL implementation should run to completion to enable MIS to manage its services to its customers in an efficient, effective and sustainable manner as more services are introduced based on the new IT business model.

Change management has two meanings in this context: people change management and architecture change management; although they are very much two sides of the same proverbial coin.
People change management is about facilitating effective collaboration and communication during the planning, management and execution of business change initiatives / projects. Such initiatives would include the enterprise roll-out of the knowledge management platform and case management platform amongst others.

Architecture change management is about ensuring that any stakeholder that is ultimately affected by changes to the architecture become part of the change journey. This is to ensure that there are no disruptions to the business as a result of changes to the architecture; and to ensure maximum business utility in the future.



ICT Governance and Planning

The implementation of the proposed IT governance structures will ensure congruency between the strategies of the AU and the ultimately realisation from an IT point of view. The governance will also ensure the alignment is maintained and sustained as elements of the architecture change over time.

| The ICT Strategic Committee can be incorporated twice a year into the Commission Meeting. The ICT Steering Committee can be incorporated once a quarter into the Directors Meeting. The Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC) will serve as the ICT Architecture Forum and the internal MIS meeting will serve as the ICT Operational Committee. |

The governance and planning area will be responsible for maintaining alignment to the AU's strategy. The key enabler for maintaining this alignment is the enterprise architecture. The enterprise architecture documents the blueprint of the enterprise and manages the evolution of the architecture over time. Portfolio management is the result of understanding the enterprise architecture and managing the change to the architecture in a coherent, consistent and sustainable manner. The risk of not managing the portfolio is the proliferation of point solutions that may enable a particular area to the detriment of the enterprise.

The management of requirements is an ad-hoc process within the AUC. Certain requirements will be considered and others may not be tabled at all. There needs to be a concerted effort to manage all requirements in a consistent manner and to report the status of all requirements back to the originator. The enterprise architecture is the baseline to analyse the impact of the requirements of the architecture and to determine the best possible solution across the portfolio to satisfy the requirements.

Program and project management formalises the business change process, ensures consistency across projects, manages budgets consistently and enables effective tracking and measurement of the progress of changes to the architecture.

Business continuity will ensure that disruptions to the business are managed in a predictable and controlled manner so as to maintain a desired level of business performance during disruptions. An enterprise-wide business continuity assessment should be conducted.

Securing information across the AU will continue to pose new challenges into the future and the enterprise architecture function should ensure that the security architecture is reviewed and adjusted continuously so as to preserve the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information in a controlled manner.

Business Alignment

| Knowledge management permeates every activity of the AU and requires a holistic analysis of the requirements across the AU and the development of a way of work for all AU stakeholders to ensure that AU knowledge is managed in a consistent manner and that the value of knowledge is leveraged in a more sustainable manner. |

Case management is not a well understood concept in the AU although it underpins a variety of use cases in the AU. Case management is an information-centric concept as it applies to working on bundles of knowledge and content until an outcome is achieved. In the context of the AU, there are multiple activities involved in the creation of content such as policies and the process will be different for every situation that involves the creation of policies. The workflows cannot be defined up front for every situation and therefore case management allows for adaptive and dynamic workflows based on the situation. Case management works in conjunction with business process management and knowledge management.

Stakeholder data is managed in various Directorates and there is a compelling requirement to manage stakeholder data in a standardised manner. This will ultimately impact on the quality and integrity of the business intelligence and analytics.

Although GIS is operational and serves the needs of individual constituencies within the AUC (Peace and Security), there is a requirement to consolidate information across the AUC and to manage the integrity of the information on an ongoing basis. A consistent management approach to GIS information and data will enable the AU to plan and develop policy more effectively, execute projects more efficiently and have visibility from an integrated planning and monitoring perspective.

Data management is generally left to the people involved with a particular data set. There are no enterprise standards and policies for data management. The result is disparate sets of data of differing quality and integrity. There needs to be a consistent approach to data management within the AUC.

Business Enablement

The business alignment stream will define the processes for knowledge management, case management, stakeholder relationship management and geographical information management.

The enterprise requirements will have its roots in the process design and modelling stages and these requirements can be consolidated and matched to current enterprise applications before considering alternatives.

| The AUC has already invested in IT solutions; and continues to invest in these enterprise applications. To maximise the return on these investments, it would be prudent for the AUC to consolidate as much as possible into these systems where it makes business sense. |

The enablement stream will evaluate current and potential solutions; and plan the implementation of the solutions based on the work processes defined.

ITSM is currently being rolled-out for the IT service desk. Once implemented, service management in general across the African Union organs should be considered.

ERP processes for finance and to a limited extent for HR have been implemented in SAP but there remains the potential for various other processes within the ERP space to be designed and modelled. There is also the potential to improve the current financial processes and extend the HR functionality currently being implemented.

Technology

| The AUC has already invested in IT solutions; and continues to invest in these enterprise applications. To maximise the return on these investments, it would be prudent for the AUC to consolidate as much as possible into these systems where it makes business sense. |

Another key theme is standardisation in the technology space. Up until now, MIS managed any technology that would be necessary to run applications required by the business. However, lifecycles of technology also have to be managed. The diversity of the technology environment also leads to potentially wasteful expenditure. There are opportunities to simplify and standardise the technology portfolio.

Disaster recovery has been implemented for only certain areas of the architecture such as the SAP system. A more holistic disaster recovery plan should be implemented based on the outcome of the business continuity assessment. MIS should also look at other AU organs (such as the Pan-African Parliament) with mature IT capabilities to collaborate in the context of disaster recovery or redundant capacity provision.

A review of the network should present MIS with options beyond satellite connectivity and may lead to more cost effective solutions and VOIP as a potentially viable option.

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