

56th Meeting of the Standing Committee
5-7 March 2013

Agenda item 4(c)

Oral update on the work of the Inspector General's Office (IGO)

I. Internal audit function

The first part of a study of options for the provision of internal audit services, as recommended by the United Nations Board of Auditors, was completed by a Canadian management consulting firm. The second part, including the development of a full business case for the chosen option and an implementation plan, will be completed by mid-February.

II. Inspection Service

Between October 2012 and January 2013, three standard inspections and one compliance mission were undertaken; one inspection report was issued; and closure memoranda for three standard inspections were issued. The Service continued to develop new tools, notably the Inspection Findings and Comments (IFC) matrix. The IFC is a modified format of the Global Management Accountability Framework (GMAF) used to capture the findings of the inspection with respect to all key management tasks and to provide quick feedback to the inspected operation on its main conclusions.

The assessment process used to establish the 2013 Inspection Work Plan was built upon the work undertaken by the Inspection Service since 2010. It is informed by draft documents emanating from the Enterprise Risk Management initiative. It draws on three main parameters: regions involving the largest and most complex operations; operations where management challenges and problems have typically recurred; and offices that are reportedly facing specific strategic or operational challenges.

The Service continued to respond to a significant number of requests for information received by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and coordinated UNHCR's implementation reports concerning the JIU's recommendations from 2006 to 2011. By the end of 2012, UNHCR had accepted 70 per cent of the JIU's recommendations and implemented 45 per cent of them, with 23 per cent in progress.

The IGO is scheduling an Advanced Inspection Training Workshop to take place in Geneva in February 2013. The purpose of this Workshop is to equip potential participants in forthcoming inspection missions with a range of skills pertinent to the conduct of inspections and report writing.

III. Investigation Service

Between October 2012 and January 2013, the Investigation Service registered 354 complaints, 62 of which related to possible staff misconduct. The majority of complaints (72 per cent) were linked to protection and assistance activities. These complaints were referred to the relevant Regional Bureaux and Divisions within UNHCR with which the Service continues to work closely to determine how best to respond to beneficiaries in a prompt and meaningful manner.

During this same period, the Service opened 29 investigations relating to alleged staff misconduct; closed 29 investigation cases that were either unfounded or lacking a sufficient degree of evidence to substantiate the case; and forwarded 9 investigation reports to the Director of the Division of Human Resources Management for action.

Investigation missions were undertaken to three countries in Africa. The Head of the Investigation Service attended the 13th Conference of International Investigators, where issues of common interest to the investigation services of all UN agencies and international financial institutions were discussed. This included the establishment of a formal United Nations investigators group.

The IGO's project, "UNHCR-NGO Coordination on Investigations," which aims at building the capacity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to carry out investigations of misconduct independently and participate in joint UNHCR-NGO investigations, continued to be developed. Furthermore, in February 2013, the IGO is convening an Advanced Investigation Training Workshop for UNHCR's main NGO partners, with a view to equipping them with additional investigatory skills.

- Revised UNHCR Guidelines on Conducting Investigations and Preparing Investigation Reports were issued to all staff and are available on the UNHCR intranet.

UNHCR
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