

**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**  
**Office of Audit and Investigations**



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

**PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

**OF**

**UNDP CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT**

**Report No. 2027**

**Issue Date: 4 January 2019**

## Report on the Audit of UNDP Crisis Response Unit Executive Summary

The UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) conducted a performance audit of the UNDP Crisis Response Unit (the Office) from 8 October to 8 November 2018. Performance auditing is an independent examination of an entity to assess whether the entity is achieving economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the employment of available resources.

The audit aimed at assessing the extent to which the Office was carrying out its functions of coordinating and facilitating UNDP's crisis response and improving UNDP's preparedness, early warning, crisis policy, crisis response and early recovery capacities.

The audit covered the activities of the Office from 1 January 2017 to 31 August 2018. At the time of the audit, the Office was going through a review, which was scheduled for completion by December 2018. Changes to the structure and mandate of the teams and units were still being discussed at the time of the audit. Therefore, the audit did not assess the review of the Office as it was still in progress. This was the first audit of the Office.

The audit was conducted in conformance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*.

### Overall audit rating

OAI assessed the Office as **satisfactory**, which means, "The assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices and controls were adequately established and functioning well. Issues identified by the audit, if any, are unlikely to affect the achievement of the objectives of the audited entity/area."

### Key recommendations: Total = 3, high priority = 1

The three recommendations aim to ensure the following: (a) achievement of the organization's strategic objectives (Recommendations 1 and 2); and (b) compliance with legislative mandates, regulations and rules, policies and procedures (Recommendation 3).

For high (critical) priority recommendations, prompt action is required to ensure that UNDP is not exposed to high risks. Failure to take action could result in major negative consequences for UNDP. The high (critical) priority recommendation is presented below:

Limited number of  
SURGE Advisors  
(Issue 1)

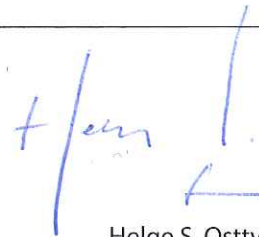
The number of SURGE Advisors was limited. There were only 193 active Surge Advisors on the roster in 2018. Out of these, 47 Advisors did not have valid release agreements, meaning that release from their offices when required was not guaranteed.

**Recommendation 1:** The Office should increase the number of SURGE Advisors by: (a) initiating a call for UNDP staff to join the SURGE roster and providing the necessary training; (b) developing a policy that specifies the mandatory release of staff based on the level of the crisis; and (c) maintaining up-to-date release agreements for all SURGE Advisors on the roster, and for any cases where staff are not released when requested, it should be reported to the Crisis Board bi-annually.

### **Management comments and action plan**

The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Crisis Bureau accepted all recommendations and is in the process of implementing them. Comments and/or additional information provided have been incorporated in the report, where appropriate.

Low risk issues (not included in this report) have been discussed directly with management and actions have been initiated to address them.



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