UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
Office of Audit and Investigations

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

OF

UNDP TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

Report No. 2131

Issue Date: 7 October 2019

Report on the Audit of UNDP Travel Management
Executive Summary

The UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) conducted a performance audit of UNDP travel management from 17 June to 19 July 2019. Performance audit 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 to review the efficiency, compliance, governance, risk management and control processes of UNDP travel. It also included discussions and tests of transactions from selected UNDP offices, Central/Regional Bureaux and Hubs. Specifically, the audit team reviewed whether travel in UNDP was managed in an economical and efficient manner, and in compliance with UNDP policies and procedures.

The audit covered UNDP travel from 1 January 2017 to 30 April 2019. The last audit of travel management was conducted by OAI in 2015, although entitlement travel was audited by OAI in 2017.

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

Overall audit rating

OAI assessed UNDP travel management as **partially satisfactory/some improvement needed**, which means, "The assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices and controls were generally established and functioning but need some improvement. Issues identified by the audit do not significantly affect the achievement of the objectives of the audited entity/area." This rating was mainly due to instances of non-compliance with UNDP policies and procedures.

Key recommendations: Total = **5**, high priority = **1**

For the high (critical) priority recommendation, 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:

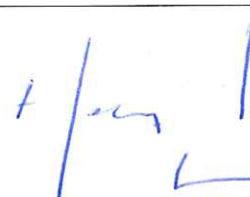|	
Non-compliance with Home Leave policy and guidance (Issue 2)	Audit testing identified a high number of instances of non-compliance with the requirements of the Home Leave policy. For instance, in 15 out of the 30 Home Leave travels reviewed, the staff members had not uploaded any supporting documentation in eServices. Additionally, in one case, the staff member had made a business deviation on the return leg of their Home Leave travel; however, there was no Travel Request raised for the official travel. In another case, the departure date of the staff member was five working days prior to the approved departure date in the Home Leave itinerary, without an amendment to the Home Leave entry.
	In discussions with the Benefits and Entitlements Services (BES) team in Copenhagen, it was confirmed that no checks had been taking place for Home Leave post-travel, but that such checks were planned to begin in late 2019.
	<u>Recommendation 2:</u> The Bureau for Management Services should develop and implement: (a) controls in eServices to ensure the timely certification of Home Leave in line with the Home Leave policy; and (b) regular checks of Home Leave travel (post-travel) to help ensure that staff comply with the Home Leave policy and certification/documentation requirements.

Management comments and action plan

The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Management Services, and the Assistant Administrators and Directors of the Regional Bureaux accepted all five recommendations and are 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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Director
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