



AUDIT

OF

UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS ICT INFRASTRUCTURE

Draft Report No. 2536
Issue Date: 22 April 2022

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Report on the Audit of the United Nations Volunteers ICT Infrastructure Executive Summary

The UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) conducted an audit of United Nations Volunteers (UNV) information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure from 14 February to 4 March 2022. The audit aimed to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and control processes relating to the following areas and sub-areas:

- (a) ICT governance
- (b) Unified Volunteering Platform
- (c) Volunteer Management Cycle
- (d) ICT security

The audit covered the activities of UNV from 1 January to 31 December 2021. The last audit of UNV was conducted by OAI in 2018.

The audit was conducted in conformance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the audit was conducted remotely. Scope limitations due to the nature of the remote audit related to the following activities:

- (a) Meetings with all parties involved in the audit were carried out virtually, which limited the audit team's understanding of auditees' working environment.
- (b) The ICT infrastructure was not reviewed on-site.

To overcome these limitations additional remote analytical tests were performed using direct access to UNV systems and applications were reviewed via videoconferencing solutions.

Overall audit rating

OAI issued an audit rating for UNV's ICT infrastructure of **fully 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 = 0, high priority = 0

The audit did not result in any recommendations.

Management comments and action plan

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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I. About United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. It is administered by UNDP and reports to the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board. The UNV Programme headquarters are located in Bonn, Germany, with 118 staff members as of March 2022 (including 13 in UNV Bonn Common Services staff managed by UNV). In 2021, 10,919 UN Volunteers were deployed worldwide.

The UNV Programme has six Regional Offices (Amman, Bangkok, Dakar, Istanbul, Nairobi and Panama City), which are the first entry point for entities wishing to engage UN Volunteers. It also has an office in New York and one in Tokyo.

The UNV ICT Section consists of 14 staff members organized in two teams, responsible for systems development and infrastructure, respectively.

Facilitation of volunteer mobilization and digitalization of business functions (such as partnerships, resource mobilization, sales and pipeline management and service desk) were mainly accomplished by using software applications developed through outsourcing. The UNDP enterprise resource planning system (Atlas) was used for human resources management as well as UNV financial and administrative operations.

II. Audit results

Effective controls were established and functioning in the following areas:

- (a) ICT governance – Ensures the effective and efficient use of ICT infrastructure to support the organization to achieve its strategic goals. UNV had established a Digital Governance Group chaired by the Executive Coordinator, which ensured that technology, strategy and investments were aligned with the UNV Strategic Framework objectives.
- (b) The Unified Volunteering Platform application – The platform was developed based on business needs with support from UNV management. No control issues were observed.
- (c) The Volunteer Management Cycle – The Volunteer Management Cycle, which covers all the management processes from UN Volunteer recruitment to repatriation, was found to be supported by appropriate IT tools. The ICT Section aggregates and prioritizes organizational IT needs and allocates resources to address them. The use of Robotic Process Automation and Business Intelligence solutions allowed UNV to expedite decision making and optimize the use of internal resources.
- (d) ICT security and resources management – ICT security and resource management were completed in accordance with the UNDP organizational policies and procedures. Internal controls over management of the organizational ICT infrastructure, including cloud resources, development of corporate applications, application support and access management were found to be efficient and effective. To strengthen the control and optimize the ICT environment, UNV is moving the ICT systems to the cloud environment to provide improved visibility over resources and enhance security.

The audit did not result in any recommendations.

Definitions of audit terms - ratings and priorities

A. AUDIT RATINGS

- **Fully Satisfactory** 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.
- **Satisfactory / Some Improvement Needed** 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.
- **Partially Satisfactory / Major Improvement Needed** The assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices and controls were established and functioning, but need major improvement. Issues identified by the audit could significantly affect the achievement of the objectives of the audited entity/area.
- **Unsatisfactory** The assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices and controls were either not adequately established or not functioning well. Issues identified by the audit could seriously compromise the achievement of the objectives of the audited entity/area.

B. PRIORITIES OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

- **High (Critical)** Prompt action is required to ensure that UNV is not exposed to high risks. Failure to take action could result in major negative consequences for UNV.
- **Medium (Important)** Action is required to ensure that UNV is not exposed to risks. Failure to take action could result in negative consequences for UNV.
- **Low** Action is desirable and should result in enhanced control or better value for money. Low priority recommendations, if any, are dealt with by the audit team directly with the Office management, either during the exit meeting or through a separate memo subsequent to the fieldwork. Therefore, low priority recommendations are not included in this report.