

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
Office of Audit and Investigations



THEMATIC AUDIT

OF

PROJECT MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT PRACTICES

IN

THE REGIONAL BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Report No. 2607
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Report on the Thematic Audit of Project Monitoring and Oversight Practices in the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific Executive Summary

The UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) conducted a thematic audit of project monitoring and oversight practices in the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP or the Regional Bureau) from 1 August to 9 December 2022.

The audit covered the period from 1 January 2020 to 15 December 2022. The audit was conducted in conformance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*. The audit was conducted remotely.

This thematic audit was undertaken using performance audit methodology. 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 assessed whether project monitoring and oversight practices at the Regional Bureau level supported Country Offices in achieving their intended results as indicated in their respective Country Programme Documents. The review included assessing the design of project monitoring frameworks, Country Office capacities to adequately monitor projects, and quality assurance processes to validate data used for decision-making and risk management. In assessing this, the audit team reviewed the Country Offices' capacities for effective implementation of programmes and projects, including a review of the corporate monitoring system for results tracking and risk management.

Further, the audit team also reviewed the role of the Regional Bureau in exercising its oversight function as the 'second line of defense' for effective programme delivery.

The following performance audit questions guided the work of the audit team:

Question 1. Were Country Offices successful in monitoring the achievement of project results and addressing any deviations from agreed work plans?

Question 2. Has the Regional Bureau established effective oversight mechanisms to ensure adequate monitoring of projects and programmes at the Country Office level?

Overall audit rating

OAI assessed the monitoring of programmes and projects within UNDP as **satisfactory/some improvement needed**, which means, "The assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices, and controls were generally established and functioning but needed 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 weaknesses in implementing monitoring controls.

The RBAP Country Offices were effective in monitoring the achievement of project results and addressing deviations, but some improvements were needed, such as the costing, level of detail and the strengthening of monitoring tools, as detailed in the audit recommendation.

RBAP has established effective oversight mechanisms to ensure adequate monitoring of projects and programmes at the Country Office level.

Key recommendations: Total = **1**, high priority = **0**



Management comments and action plan

The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific accepted the recommendation and is implementing it. 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.

Moncef Ghrib

Officer-in-Charge
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