



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2023/052

Audit of civil affairs activities in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

While UNIFIL effectively administered quick impact projects, there was a need to enhance the effectiveness of civil affairs activities through active role of the Community Outreach Board and regular public perception surveys

27 October 2023

Assignment No. AP 2022-672-02

Audit of civil affairs activities in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of civil affairs activities in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the civil affairs programme in UNIFIL. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2023 and included: (a) planning of civil affairs activities; (b) cross-mission liaison, monitoring and facilitation at the local level; (c) support to confidence-building, and extension of state authority; and (d) performance monitoring and reporting.

The Civil Affairs Section (CAS) in UNIFIL played a key role in the Mission's operations, working closely with local communities to promote acceptance of mandated tasks and help build confidence in the peace process. CAS developed work plans aligned with the mission strategy and included activities to implement the civil affairs programme. CAS acted as the primary interface between the Mission and the local communities and managed quick impact projects (QIPs) as confidence and capacity-building measures to improve the environment for mandate implementation. However, there was a need to enhance the effectiveness of civil affairs activities through active role of the Community Outreach Board and regular public perception surveys.

OIOS made two recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, UNIFIL needed to:

- Ensure that the Community Outreach Board regularly meets and carries out its responsibilities to develop, approve and monitor the implementation of the civil affairs outreach strategy.
- Conduct the public perception survey within its 2023/2024 budget to gather information to support civil affairs activities.

UNIFIL accepted both recommendations and has initiated action to implement them. Actions required to close the recommendations are indicated in Annex I.

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Audit of civil affairs activities in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of civil affairs activities in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).
2. The Civil Affairs Section (CAS) in UNIFIL played a key role in the Mission's operations, working closely with local communities to promote acceptance of mandated tasks and help build confidence in the peace process. The Section acted as the primary interface between the Mission and local communities by communicating to the Mission the priorities and perceptions of different sectors of the population. The Section was also responsible for managing quick impact projects (QIPs) as confidence and capacity-building measures to improve the environment for mandate implementation.
3. CAS was headed by a Chief at the D-1 level who reported to the Deputy Head of Mission and Director of Political and Civil Affairs. The Section had 21 authorized posts of 9 international and 12 national staff. The budget for CAS is used for staff costs, official travel and other operating costs. The budgets for the last four years are shown in table 1 below. The UNIFIL approved budget for QIPs was \$0.5 million for each of the four fiscal years.

Table 1- The Civil Affairs Section budgets for the period from 2019/20 to 2022/23 (in United States dollars)

Cost Category	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Staff costs	3,267,600	3,607,450	3,657,100	4,352,900
Official travel	17,355	14,400	10,200	12,600
Other operating costs	12,600	12,000	9,500	9,800
Total budget	\$3,297,555	\$3,633,850	\$3,676,800	\$4,375,300

Source: UNIFIL approved budgets and Umoja data

4. Comments provided by UNIFIL are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

5. The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the civil affairs programme in UNIFIL.
6. This audit was included in the 2022 risk-based work plan of OIOS as the management of civil affairs activities was a key mandated task.
7. OIOS conducted this audit from October 2022 to June 2023. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2023. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risks areas in the civil affairs activities, which included: (a) planning of civil affairs activities; (b) cross-mission liaison, monitoring and facilitation at the local level; (c) support to confidence-building, conflict management and extension of state authority; and (d) performance monitoring and reporting.
8. The audit methodology included: (a) interview with key personnel, (b) review of relevant documentation, (c) analytical review of data, (d) visits to 16 field locations to observe the civil affairs activities.

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

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Planning of civil affairs activities

Need for the Community Outreach Board to meet more regularly

10. The UNIFIL Mission Concept covering the period 2021 to 2024 outlined the purpose of the Mission, broad political direction, guiding principles, strategic priorities and risks. The Concept highlighted community outreach as a key area of focus and emphasized it under the third and sixth strategic priorities: the extension of state authority and confidence-building measures to maintain the cessation of hostilities. UNIFIL also played an important role to support key government institutions in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. This included donations of personal protective and medical equipment, medicines and detergents, supply of COVID-19 test kits, beds and mattresses.

11. In 2017, a strategic review was conducted on UNIFIL, which suggested the establishment of a Community Outreach Board (COB), led and chaired by the Deputy Head of Mission and Director of Political and Civil Affairs. The Board's main objective was to enhance the coherence and efficiency of UNIFIL's Integrated Outreach Operations (IOO) by providing strategic direction to the outreach personnel. The COB's main responsibilities were: (i) deciding and approving the Mission's IOO direction and policies; (ii) developing and approving a strategic masterplan of community engagement undertaken by UNIFIL's Outreach Assets; (iii) establishing IOO priorities; and (iv) deciding and approving the content and focus of IOO objectives, strategic key messaging and talking points. The Mission established the COB in August 2017 and had an Integrated Outreach Operations Coordination Board Executive Committee (IOOCBEC) in place to coordinate outreach activities and facilitate information sharing between military and civilian personnel. The UNIFIL Mission Concept and the enterprise risk management framework identified COB recommendations as part of the internal controls and response to the risks identified therein.

12. A review of documents and discussions with key personnel indicated that the COB had met only once during the audit period, on 17 June 2022. This was contrary to the standard operating procedures (SOP) on Integrated Outreach Operations which required the COB to meet quarterly. Key CAS staff indicated that the COB had not met as required because the results of the monthly IOOCBEC meetings were sufficient. However, the IOOCBEC was established as a coordination forum for the exchange of information and ideas between the military and civilian pillars. It did not have a mandate to perform the functions of the COB. During the IOOCBEC meetings, stakeholders presented on the activities they carried out during the previous month and provided an overview of planned activities for the coming months. Strategic issues were not discussed, nor were they referred or recommended to the COB for decision-making. There was also no evidence that IOOCBEC performed COB key functions including the development and approval of a strategic master plan for UNIFIL community engagement that decides the structure and form of integrated outreach projects and campaigns.

13. Due to the absence of regular COB meetings, a strategic masterplan of community engagement activities was not developed. Therefore, there was a risk that adequate strategic guidance may not be provided for the Mission's QIPs and outreach activities, which may result in the misalignment of QIPs and TCC projects with the Lebanese Government's national action plan and strategy.

- (1) UNIFIL should ensure that the Community Outreach Board regularly meets and carries out its responsibilities to develop, approve and monitor the implementation of the civil affairs outreach strategy.**

UNIFIL accepted recommendation 1 and established a deadline of 30 June 2024 to convene a meeting.

Work planning in the Civil Affairs Section was adequate

14. Public perception and reputation risk was documented in the UNIFIL risk register under CAS as the risk owner. Key drivers of this risk included negative perceptions of the local community towards sensitive projects, unrealistic expectations of parties who see the Mission acting outside its mandate, and road accidents leading to loss of life among UNIFIL personnel and host communities. CAS annual work plans for the last three fiscal years showed that they included measures to mitigate these key drivers. These included disseminating consistent messages for communities and conflict resolution, training Mission staff on conflict and culture, and road safety awareness campaigns.

15. The work plans were aligned with the multi-year strategy elaborated in the Mission Concept. For example, activities in all CAS work plans for the three fiscal years included: community liaison and outreach, dialogue and social cohesion, and restoration of state authority as core components. The work plans also identified priority activities, such as building good liaison networks between the Mission and all key stakeholders, engaging community and country-level stakeholders, ensuring close collaboration with United Nations agencies and the donor community, and implementing QIPs. The plans were finalized after the annual CAS retreats with input from the Mission Leadership Team (MLT). Based on the above, OIOS concluded that UNIFIL had developed adequate workplans.

B. Cross-mission liaison, monitoring and facilitation at the local level

There was adequate local-level liaison and representation

16. A review of CAS staffing as of 30 June 2023 indicated that the Section had deployed 21 staff across its area of operation: 7 at the Mission's headquarters in Naqoura, 7 in Sector East and 7 in Sector West. CAS had established local-level liaison and representation at the national, regional and local levels, including in all 145 municipalities. The Section had also established and maintained regular contact with civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and religious institutions in its area of operation.

17. CAS had an established network with its interlocutors suitable for obtaining and sharing information. Information exchanged included issues related to economic and social challenges facing the local community, such as lack of jobs for youth, inadequate water and electricity supply and crime rates. In addition, CAS held regular meetings with United Nations agencies, resulting in the development and implementation of joint projects. The meetings also provided an opportunity to identify planned projects in a timely manner, which resulted in avoiding duplication of efforts. CAS also held meetings with local community leaders to discuss various conflicts that had arisen between the Mission and local community members. CAS used the information gathered from the meetings to find possible solutions to the conflicts. For example, one of the sources of conflict was the heavy presence of large military vehicles on the narrow village roads. Therefore, CAS contacted relevant Mission components to advocate for the use of smaller patrol vehicles. CAS is also part of various committees and working groups within UNIFIL that contribute to the achievement of its civil affairs objectives. These include the Integrated Outreach Operation Cell, Civil-Military Cooperation and Coordination (CIMIC), Mission Intelligence Coordination Mechanism, Project Review Committee and Community Outreach Board meetings.

18. CAS provided training for military personnel that included lectures on the protection of civilians and the protection of children for incoming military and civilian personnel during induction training at UNIFIL headquarters, as well as training on cultural sensitivity and conflict management for battalions in both Sector East and Sector West. CAS made presentations at all 29 induction trainings held during the audit period and conducted 16 cultural sensitivity and conflict management trainings in the sectors.

19. The mission-wide comprehensive strategy on the Protection of Civilians (PoC) provides a common approach for all UNIFIL components (military, substantive and support) to ensure PoC is integrated into the mission's day-to-day activities, work plans, concept of operations and contingency plans. Under the operational concept of PoC Tier I: Protection through dialogue and engagement, CAS contributed to peacebuilding efforts through dialogue and early warning at the local level. Under Tier III: Establishing a protective environment, CAS implemented QIPs to support local actors in assuming their role in protecting civilians, such as equipping local civil emergency responders. The strategy also highlights the roles and responsibilities of CAS in conducting public opinion surveys and engaging with local community contacts as the mission's early warning system and for timely identification of possible patterns and trends. The strategy further states that monitoring and reporting on the mission's implementation of its PoC mandate will be done within the Mission, which CAS does through its weekly reports. The PoC Implementation Plan 2022/23 outlines responsibilities for CAS which, based on the OIOS review, are currently being done. Based on the above, OIOS concluded that UNIFIL had implemented adequate controls for cross-mission representation, monitoring and facilitation with local communities and other stakeholders.

Mission could enhance the Tracking Engagement Community and Village Assessment Database

20. To facilitate cross-mission liaison, monitoring and facilitation at the local level, various outreach personnel used two databases, namely the Tracking Engagement Community (TEC) to track their community engagement and avoid duplication of work, and the Village Assessment Database (VADB) used by the battalions to record the village assessment on each of the 148 villages located in South Lebanon. The TEC reports created by CAS in the first quarter of 2023 indicated the purpose of the engagement, the participants and the main message communicated. The VADB provided background information on each village, such as history, mayor's name, population, religious and political affiliation and more.

21. However, the TEC files were not hyperlinked to these engagements' detailed briefing notes, meeting minutes or action items, limiting ready access for other outreach assets to detailed engagement data. CAS staff members explained they encountered technical problems using the hyperlink because it sometimes did not work properly. Regarding the VADB, OIOS review indicated that it was not regularly updated. Of 30 reports reviewed, 22 (or 73 per cent) contained sections where some information on political and religious affiliations, registered population and major civil infrastructure had not been updated. Staff at CIMIC stated that information on religion and political affiliation is rarely provided and explained that this may be due to the local community not being as open with military personnel. There was a risk that the MLT would not receive quality information for decision-making regarding community engagement and key messages and that situational analysis could be incomplete if this information is missing. While OIOS did not make a recommendation, management could consider: (a) measures to ensure that its community engagement database files contain the required documentation and that the information is available to all outreach personnel, and (b) advising military personnel to engage with CAS staff where necessary for information gaps about the local community.

The Civil Affairs Section had taken steps to manage records in a central repository

22. The information sensitivity toolkit highlights the importance of proper management of records and information as assets of the United Nations. At CAS, numerous records and information are generated, including work plans, project implementation records, project monitoring and closure reports, agreements and memoranda of understanding, minutes of meetings, emails and correspondences with other United Nations agencies, and code cables with United Nations Headquarters. This was stored on the Secretariat's Microsoft SharePoint, and data on tracking of QIPs projects and those on community engagement was held on the UNIFIL's Geospatial Information System (GIS) database. Access to this information was restricted to staff assigned to manage them. Therefore, OIOS concluded that CAS appropriately managed records and information.

C. Support to confidence-building and extension of state authority

The Civil Affairs Section administered effectively quick impact projects to build local trust and confidence

23. The Mission supported the expansion of state authority by implementing QIPs at the local level to provide operational support to state institutions. This included assessment of preliminary capacity-building and support needs, logistical and administrative support, small-scale capacity-building support and local implementation of joint capacity-building projects with other development actors.

24. CAS implemented 142 QIPs in three thematic areas from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2023, as shown in table 2. In selecting projects between Sector East and Sector West, the Mission sought a fair and equitable geographic distribution. There were explainable differences between sectors due to the various factors affecting the distribution of QIP funds. These include the availability of projects funded by TCCs, previous project support to villages, the strategic intent of UNIFIL, and emerging issues (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic). In fiscal years 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23, the proportions of the Mission's QIPs co-financed by CIMIC, United Nations agencies and various municipalities were 39, 23, 44 and 28 per cent, respectively. Local authorities' involvement can help to build confidence between local authorities and communities, and participation of other United Nations agencies minimizes duplication of efforts.

Table 2: Distribution of QIPs by UNIFIL thematic areas of intervention and budget (in United States dollars)

Thematic areas of intervention	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
Support to the extension of state authority/civic education/capacity-building	15	17	11	13	56
Access to basic services (education, water/sanitation, health)	12	12	13	10	47
Conflict management/confidence-building initiatives	14	9	7	9	39
Total	41	38	31	32	142
Total Budget	\$499,858	\$499,748	\$499,998	\$499,950	\$1,999,554

Source: UNIFIL Civil Affairs Section

- a. The Project Review Committee adequately discharged its functions

25. UNIFIL had centralized the QIPs selection process and established a Project Review Committee (PRC) at the Mission Headquarters in Naqoura. The PRC members comprised CAS, CIMIC, Engineering and Facilities Management Section, Finance and Budget Management Section and Gender Advisory Unit.

The Environment Unit attended as an observer. OIOS review of all the 142 QIPs implemented in the audit period indicated that procedures were followed to review and approve QIPs. For example, decision-making was documented, and projects were reviewed and approved within two months of receipt of the proposal in line with the QIP's policy.

26. In addition, CAS and CIMIC coordinated their funding plans and project proposals and reviewed projects jointly to avoid duplication of effort and achieve a more equitable distribution of assistance programs throughout the Mission area. To avoid duplication of projects, CAS maintained communication with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes through working groups and board meetings. These included the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for PoC, the United Nations Development Programme for social livelihood stability, and the United Nations Children's Fund for education promotion.

b. Projects were adequately monitored

27. About 44 per cent of QIPs initiated during the audit period related to the purchase of equipment, construction and rehabilitation of buildings and other engineering works. The Mission allocated engineering expertise to review and provide technical support to projects. Focal points were also assigned to projects to monitor implementing partners for quality control. The focal points also conducted site visits and reviewed and evaluated projects to ensure implementing partners' compliance with UNIFIL QIP procedures. Additionally, field visits to 16 project sites confirmed that the projects had been implemented, including support for constructing a Red Cross center in Chebaa, constructing a public park in As Sultaniyah and renovating the Women's Vocational Training Center in Tyre.

28. In planning and implementing QIPs, CAS interacted with various stakeholders within and outside the Mission. Internal stakeholders included the Finance and Budget Management Section, Gender Advisory Unit and CIMIC. OIOS review of ten Tactical Community Outreach Team reports indicated that CAS also interacted with various local community representatives and authorities from regional governorates to the municipal level. This was done either as a liaison (i.e., local interaction with the population, authorities, private/public actors, non-governmental organizations, meetings, visits, discussions and ceremonies) or as an intermediary between the UNIFIL military component and local communities.

29. Timely completion of QIPs to provide immediate tangible benefits to the local community is key to creating an enabling environment for mandate implementation. The Policy on QIPs states that projects should be completed within 180 days from the date the implementing partner receives the first instalment of project funding. OIOS review found that projects were completed on time except during the COVID-19 period. COVID-19-related challenges caused four projects to be delayed in 2019/20 and further delayed one project in 2020/21, where required materials were unavailable, and banking restrictions impacted the ability of vendors to obtain project funds.

c. Projects were visible to the local population

30. UNIFIL had established procedures to guide implementing partners to ensure the visibility of projects. Visibility was a mandatory step in the closure process of QIPs. For 16 project sites visited, there were visibility boards at the project sites to inform the local population of the Mission's contribution to the local community. Also, interviews with beneficiaries confirmed that they were aware that UNIFIL had funded the projects. The local media covered project inauguration ceremonies.

31. Based on the above, OIOS concluded that CAS adequately oversaw and administered the QIPs to support confidence building and the expansion of state authority in southern Lebanon.

D. Performance monitoring and reporting

The Civil Affairs Section had taken steps to evaluate civil affairs activities

32. CAS had conducted an internal evaluation of its work plans to assess how it had met the previous year's goals. However, the methodology did not include evaluation criteria, making it difficult to effectively assess the programme, make recommendations, and develop an action plan. Although CAS had rated all its activities as good, OIOS review noted the followings:

- Activities and outputs such as dissemination of reports, distribution of gadgets, and collaboration with other components of the Mission were listed as outcomes in the evaluation report.
- The evaluators did not consider relevant information such as the impact of the trainings ascertained through participant feedback, an assessment of the trainings to determine participant perceptions of the effectiveness and relevance of the topic to the audience, and adjustments to improve civil affairs activities.
- The information noted in the evaluation report could have been better supported with quantitative data, such as statistics showing how QIPs were equitably distributed across the operational area, how many actual outreach activities were conducted to promote troop acceptance versus those planned, and how many meetings were held with other organizations/agencies to identify areas of common concern.

33. The above was attributed to the lack of a mission-wide policy and guidelines for self-evaluation of its mandated activities, including civil affairs. This policy, a requirement per ST/AI/2021/3, did not exist at the time of the audit. Although CAS staff indicated that the results of their evaluation were sufficient to measure the outcomes of their activities, the Section needed guidance on internal evaluation to produce a more meaningful assessment of its activities. UNIFIL has since issued an evaluation policy which was approved on 22 August 2023. Since CAS had conducted an evaluation and UNIFIL has issued the policy, OIOS did not make a recommendation.

Mission could improve reporting of civil affairs activities

34. CAS produces various reports as part of its work. One report it produces is the weekly report, which contains detailed information about the various weekly activities. These include political developments and security issues, community needs and priorities, support/facilitation of troop acceptance, Mission and national projects, support to Lebanese government institutions/environmental issues, and inter-agency activities, humanitarian situation and child protection. Weekly reports were provided to the MLT to keep them abreast of the situation in the area of operation. However, some of the information in these weekly reports could be more useful if combined. For example, the data on training and conflict resolution could be combined to show whether training has led to less conflict. Similarly, information on QIPs and interagency meetings could be combined to show whether collaboration is leading to a lack of duplication of effort. In addition, the information in the weekly reports is a good source for conducting data analysis that could help CAS gain insights and trends that would be helpful in decision-making. Data visualization could also improve the readability of CAS reports by helping to process information more quickly.

35. CAS stated that the lack of use of data analytics and visualization in their work was due to a lack of adequate skills. CAS had taken steps to address this gap by reaching out to the Integrated Mission

Training Center, but the solutions offered exceeded their training budget. To allow users to understand reported performance easily, CAS needed to improve its use of data analytics and data visualization.

36. CAS and CIMIC evaluated QIPs and reported results in project closure reports and Long-Term Monitoring Evaluation (LTME) reports, separately. A review of 40 QIPs closure reports showed that the reports captured details on the evaluation of impact, such as whether the project was helpful to the population and comments from beneficiaries. The project closure report also included lessons learned. Similarly, the LTME reports prepared by CIMIC included information on how the community utilized the project, whether it was properly maintained, and lessons learned. LTME was conducted for projects implemented over a period of two years or more. CAS used project closure and LTME reports to inform activity planning and implementation.

37. In addition to preparing project closure reports for each QIP, the Mission also evaluated the QIP programme annually, in accordance with policy guidance that called for statistical reviews specifically addressing the following criteria: (a) number of QIPs completed within 180 days; (b) percentage of QIPs funded for projects promoting women's participation in the peace process; (c) percentage of QIPs co-funded with other actors; (d) percentage of QIPs distributed across thematic areas of operation; and (e) percentage of QIPs related to the Mission's area of operation based on local perceptions. The Mission had commented on the identified issues in various documents; however, it did not summarize the data in tables or graphs mainly due to inadequate skills to capture and monitor statistical data on QIPs. Presenting project information visually on dashboards would provide better insight into tracking, monitoring and reporting of their progress. During the audit, UNIFIL informed OIOS that CAS would work closely with the IMTC to train its personnel on existing United Nations data analytics and data visualization, and therefore, OIOS did not make a recommendation.

Need to conduct a public perception survey

38. In UNIFIL, the public perception survey is budgeted every two years as part of Strategic Communication and Public Information (SCPI) activities. The last survey was conducted in March 2020. The 2021/22 survey, for which UNIFIL had allocated a budget of \$65,891, was to be conducted in 2022. Procurement documents revealed that a consulting firm had been contracted to conduct the survey for an initial one-year period from 1 September 2019 through 31 August 2020, with the possibility of renewal for three one-year periods. However, by the contract expiry date, the Mission had yet to conduct a survey or utilize the optional extension. Discussions with procurement staff indicated that repeated attempts had been made to notify SCPI of the impending expiration of the contract without success. The Procurement Section also confirmed that there had been no solicitations to establish a new contract following the expiry of the previous one. Key staff from both CAS and SCPI stated that the Mission could not proceed with the contracted consultant due to a conflict of interest, as the consultant had been appointed to a ministerial position at the time the 2021/22 survey was to be conducted. As a result, UNIFIL missed an opportunity to gather valuable information that would have been beneficial for the planning and implementation of civil affairs activities, especially given the socioeconomic challenges in the country and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the local population. SCPI indicated that it had included the survey in the draft budget for 2023/24.

(2) UNIFIL should conduct the public perception survey within its 2023/2024 budget to gather information to support civil affairs activities.

UNIFIL accepted recommendation 2 and stated that preparation and actions remain ongoing. The survey was expected to be completed by June 2024.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

39. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of UNIFIL for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of civil affairs activities in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
1.	UNIFIL should ensure that the Community Outreach Board regularly meets and carries out its responsibilities to develop, approve and monitor the implementation of the civil affairs outreach strategy.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of COB meetings being held.	30 June 2024
2.	UNIFIL should conduct the public perception survey within its 2023/2024 budget to gather information to support civil affairs activities.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of the public perception survey being conducted.	30 June 2024

¹ Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

² Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.

³ Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

⁴ Date provided by UNIFIL in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response

UNITED NATIONS

INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON



NATIONS UNIES

FORCE INTERIMAIRE AU LIBAN

24 October 2023

To: Mr. Byung-Kun Min, Director,
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

From: Major General Aroldo Lázaro Sáenz
Head of Mission and Force Commander, UNIFIL

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "AS", is written over the name of the sender.

Subject: **Draft report on an Audit of Civil Affairs Activities in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (Assignment No. AP2022/672/02)**

1. I refer to your memorandum on the above subject, reference No. OIOS-2023-01791 dated 10 October 2023. Please find attached UNIFIL's response to the recommendations contained in the subject Draft Report.

2. In following the usual procedure, copies of the supporting documents will only be provided to MERAO based at UNIFIL HQ and will not be transmitted to you with this Mission's response.

Best regards.

cc: Mr. Herve Lecoq, UNIFIL
Mr. Albagir Adam, UNIFIL
Mr. Effendi Syukur, UNIFIL
Mr. David Nyskohus, OIOS
Mr. Kemal Karaseki, OIOS
Mr. Hoa Thanh Quach, OIOS
Mr. Jeffrey Lin, IAD, OIOS

Management Response

Audit of civil affairs activities in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ⁵ / Important ⁶	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1.	UNIFIL should ensure that the Community Outreach Board regularly meets and carries out its responsibilities to develop, approve and monitor the implementation of the civil affairs outreach strategy.	Important	Yes	Office of the DHoM	30 June 2024	UNIFIL's Strategic Review of 2017, recommended that UNIFIL establish a Community Outreach Board (COB) led by the Deputy Head of Mission (DHOM). Civil Affairs SCPI form the secretariat of the COB. A meeting of the COB was planned for October 2023 but has been postponed in view of the evolving situation. The current target implementation date remains contingent on the situation.
2.	UNIFIL should conduct the public perception survey within its 2023/2024 budget to gather information to support civil affairs activities.	Important	Yes	Civil Affairs	30 June 2024	The process is ongoing for conduct of the survey and the questionnaire is being refined. Once validated, the procurement process will start. This should be conducted before the end of the current fiscal year, should the security situation permit.

⁵ Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

⁶ Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.