Evaluation of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs

6 April 2018

Assignment No.: IED-18-007

OIOS

Office of Internal Oversight Services

FUNCTION

"The Office shall evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes and legislative mandates of the Organization. It shall conduct programme evaluations with the purpose of establishing analytical and critical evaluations of the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, examining whether changes therein require review of the methods of delivery, the continued relevance of administrative procedures and whether the activities correspond to the mandates as they may be reflected in the approved budgets and the medium-term plan of the Organization" (General Assembly [Resolution 48/218 B]).

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Executive Summary

The goal of disarmament efforts is general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) supports and facilitates Member State action in pursuit of this goal, and enhances disarmament and non-proliferation measures by promoting, strengthening and consolidating multilaterally negotiated principles and norms and their implementation. It does this through its three functional pillars, namely: (i) normative work, by facilitating the process of multilateral negotiation and deliberation of the intergovernmental disarmament machinery; (ii) technical assistance, through the provision of specialised capacity-building and advisory services; and (iii) information and outreach efforts.

This full-programme evaluation covered all areas of UNODA work from 2014-2017. The evaluation questions focused on the following areas:

Relevance: Extent to which UNODA identified and responded to stakeholder needs and priorities, and extent of its value-added in the broader landscape of disarmament actors;
Effectiveness: Extent to which the normative, technical assistance and outreach work contributed to targeted outcomes;
Efficiency: How adeptly UNODA used its resources and inputs to achieve objectives; and
Cross-cutting issues: Key factors that helped or hindered maximum relevance, effectiveness and efficiency; extent to which UNODA incorporated gender and human rights considerations in its work, and aligned its work with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

During the period evaluated, the UNODA work programme was consistent with its mandate and largely responsive to stakeholder needs, and was considered a key impartial broker and technical partner on disarmament issues. Nonetheless, and despite the broad relevance of its work, UNODA lacked a deliberate, systematic and holistic approach to strategic planning, which hindered its potential maximum relevance. UNODA successfully delivered most outputs of its work programme; however, the results of this work were only partly known, owing in part to a long-standing lack of systematic outcome-level monitoring, self-evaluation and reporting.

While UNODA implemented its workplan before the backdrop of a challenging operating context, a broad mandate and unstable resources, it did not fully harness its considerable internal assets, structures and functions, or external partnerships, to achieve maximum results within its existing capacity. UNODA made some limited contributions to the SDGs, but did not systematically frame its work to concretely support their implementation, nor did it embrace a clear and coordinated approach to discussions on relevant frontier issues.

OIOS-IED made five important recommendations, namely that UNODA:

- Strengthen its strategic planning process, leading to a detailed strategic plan;
- Map its internal assets and gaps, and reconfigure its structural arrangements, policies and strategies as necessary and feasible;
- Define its comparative advantage and roles on all relevant SDGs, especially target 16.4;
- Strengthen its monitoring and self-evaluation; and
- Put forward proposals to improve the sustainability of the Implementation Support Units.

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I.   Introduction and objective

1.   The Inspection and Evaluation Division (IED) of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) identified UNODA for evaluation based on a risk assessment to identify Secretariat evaluation priorities for 2017-2019. The Committee for Programme and Coordination selected UNODA as one of the programmes for consideration at its 59th session, to be held in June 2019.[1] The General Assembly endorsed the selection in its resolution 72/9.

2.   The general frame of reference for OIOS is in General Assembly resolutions 48/218B, 54/244, 59/272, as well as ST/SGB/273, which authorise OIOS to initiate, carry out and report on any action it considers necessary to fulfil its responsibilities. OIOS evaluation is provided in the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.[2]

3.   This evaluation's overall objective was to determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of UNODA from 2014-2017. The decision to undertake a full-programme evaluation emerged from a risk assessment described in the evaluation inception paper produced at the outset of the evaluation.[3] The evaluation was conducted in conformity with norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations System.[4]

4.   UNODA management comments were sought on the draft report and taken into account in the final report. The UNODA response is included in the Annex.

II.   Background

Mandate, role and stakeholders

5.   Disarmament is enshrined in the United Nations Charter,[5] and thus constitutes a key pillar of the Organisation.[6] The UNODA mandate derives from A/RES/S-10/2 of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, also known as the First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament. In addition to other disarmament-related resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly,[7] UNODA is guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[8]

6.   The ultimate aim of disarmament efforts is "general and complete disarmament"[9] under strict and effective international control. Whereas Member States bear ultimate responsibility for this goal, UNODA is responsible for supporting them toward its achievement. The Office facilitates

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[1] Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, Fifty-seventh session, A/72/16, June 2017.
[2] ST/SGB/2016/6, Regulation 7.1.
[3] IED-17-005, OIOS-IED Inception Paper: United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, 15 June 2017.
[4] Issued by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in 2016.
[5] UN Charter, Preamble and Articles 11, 26 and 47, *inter alia*.
[6] See, e.g.: A/RES/71/274, para. 9; A/RES/69/264, para. 9; A/RES/67/248, para. 12; A/RES/65/262, para. 13; A/RES/63/266, para. 17; A/RES/61/254, para. 9; A/RES/59/278, para. 8; A/RES/57/280, para. 13; A/RES/55/233, para. 11; A/RES/53/206, para. 13; A/RES/51/220, para. 8.
[7] See A/71/6(Prog.3), under "Legislative mandates."
[8] Cf. A/71/6/Rev.1(Prog.3), para. 3.2.
[9] See UNODA Occasional Papers no. 28, October 2016, *Rethinking General and Complete Disarmament in the Twenty-First Century*, p. v.

and encourages disarmament and non-proliferation measures in all aspects and at all levels by assisting Member States in the promotion, strengthening and consolidation of multilaterally negotiated principles and norms, and in their implementation.

7. The Office seeks to achieve this objective through its three functional pillars, namely:

    a. **Normative work**, by facilitating multilateral deliberation and negotiation processes through the provision of organisational and substantive support and advice to the disarmament intergovernmental machinery (i.e., the First Committee; the Disarmament Commission; the Conference on Disarmament [CD], the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community; and review conferences and other meetings of parties to multilateral disarmament agreements, as requested by States parties and expert groups mandated by the General Assembly), and by supporting and servicing relevant meetings of the 1540 Committee, a subsidiary body of the Security Council created to monitor and ensure the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1540;[10]
    b. **Technical assistance**, through the provision of specialised capacity-building and advisory services; and
    c. **Information and outreach**, through publications, dissemination campaigns and other activities.

8. Alongside the main activities of these three pillars, UNODA also provides:

    a. **Advice and assistance to the Secretary-General** in discharging his disarmament responsibilities and related security matters;
    b. **Identification and analysis of emerging issues and challenges** and their implications for the United Nations role in maintaining international peace and security;
    c. **Assistance to regional disarmament efforts**, as requested by Member States, to promote regional approaches to disarmament and non-proliferation and to support regional and international peace and security;[11] and
    d. **Disarmament expertise** in conflict-prevention and post-conflict peace-building efforts, including: support to practical disarmament measures; promotion of greater expertise in all areas of multilateral disarmament;[12] and promotion of openness and transparency in military matters through verification and confidence-building measures.[13]

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[10] This resolution obliges States, *inter alia*, to refrain from supporting non-State actors from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting or using nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their delivery systems.

[11] Undertaken mainly through regional centres.

[12] Through the Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament, the Training and Advisory Services Programme, and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

[13] Cf. ST/SGB/2008/8, para. 2.1, and Biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2016-2017 [A/69/6/Rev.1(Prog.3)], paras. 3.1 and 3.3.

Structure, management and governance

9.   UNODA is guided by its strategic framework and programme budget.[14] Table 1 summarises its five subprogrammes and their corresponding objectives, pursuant to the overarching objectives described in paras. 5-6.

Table 1: UNODA subprogramme objectives

Subprogramme	Objectives
1. **Multilateral negotiations and deliberations on disarmament and arms limitation**	Support multilateral negotiations and deliberations on disarmament, arms limitation and non-proliferation in all its aspects
2. **Weapons of mass destruction (WMD)**	Promote and support disarmament and non-proliferation, including existing treaties and WMD-related mandates
3. **Conventional arms (CA)**	Promote greater mutual confidence and the regulation and limitation of CA
4. **Information and outreach (I&O)**	Increase understanding and knowledge of Member States and the public on disarmament issues
5. **Regional disarmament**	Promote and support regional disarmament efforts

10.   UNODA is headed by a High Representative for Disarmament Affairs at the Under-Secretary-General (USG) level, who is assisted by a Deputy and accountable to the Secretary-General.[15] The structure of UNODA consists of the Office of the High Representative, which includes the Strategic Planning Unit; an Executive Office; and five branches: the CD Secretariat and Conference Support Branch (CDSCSB) which includes the Implementation Support Units (ISUs); WMD Branch (WMDB); CA Branch (CAB); I&O Branch (IOB); and Regional Disarmament Branch (RDB). RDB comprises: the headquarters-based Regional Activities Unit; the UNODA Office in Vienna;[16] the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC) in Lomé; the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) in Kathmandu; and the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) in Lima.

11.   Member States exercise governance over UNODA through the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, where they review and approve the Strategic Framework and programme budget. UNODA also reports to the First Committee of the General Assembly on various components of its work.

Resources

12.   The UNODA budget has four components, corresponding to the subprogrammes described in Figure 1. Total 2016-2017 budget appropriations were $55.3 million – i.e., 34.3 per cent larger than 2012-2013 expenditures and 16.2 per cent larger than 2014-2015 expenditures. This growth was mostly attributable to increasing extrabudgetary (XB) resources, which in 2016-2017 appropriations were 90.1 per cent larger than 2012-2013 expenditures. Figure 2 illustrates the growth of XB, which by 2016-2017 represented a higher proportion of UNODA financial resources than regular budget (RB) resources. RB appropriations to UNODA in 2012-2017 were, on average,

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[14] A/69/6(Prog.3), A/70/6(Sect. 4).
[15] A/68/6, para. 4.9, and A/70/6(Sect.4), Annex I.
[16] From 2018 [A/72/6(Sect.4)].

1.78 per cent of the RB allocated to political affairs, and 0.45 per cent of the total United Nations Secretariat.[17]

Figure 1: UNODA financial resources, by component, 2012-2017 (in $ millions)
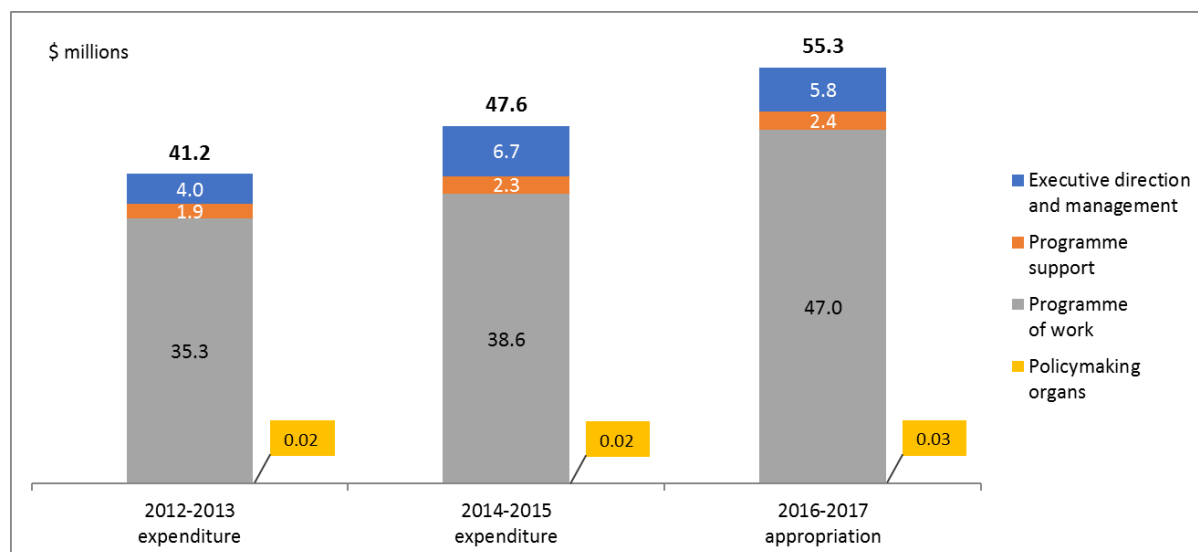
Source: OIOS-IED synthesis of A/70/6(Sect.4) and A/72/6(Sect.4)/Corr.1

Figure 2: UNODA financial resources, by source (RB or XB), 2012-2017 (in $ millions and %)
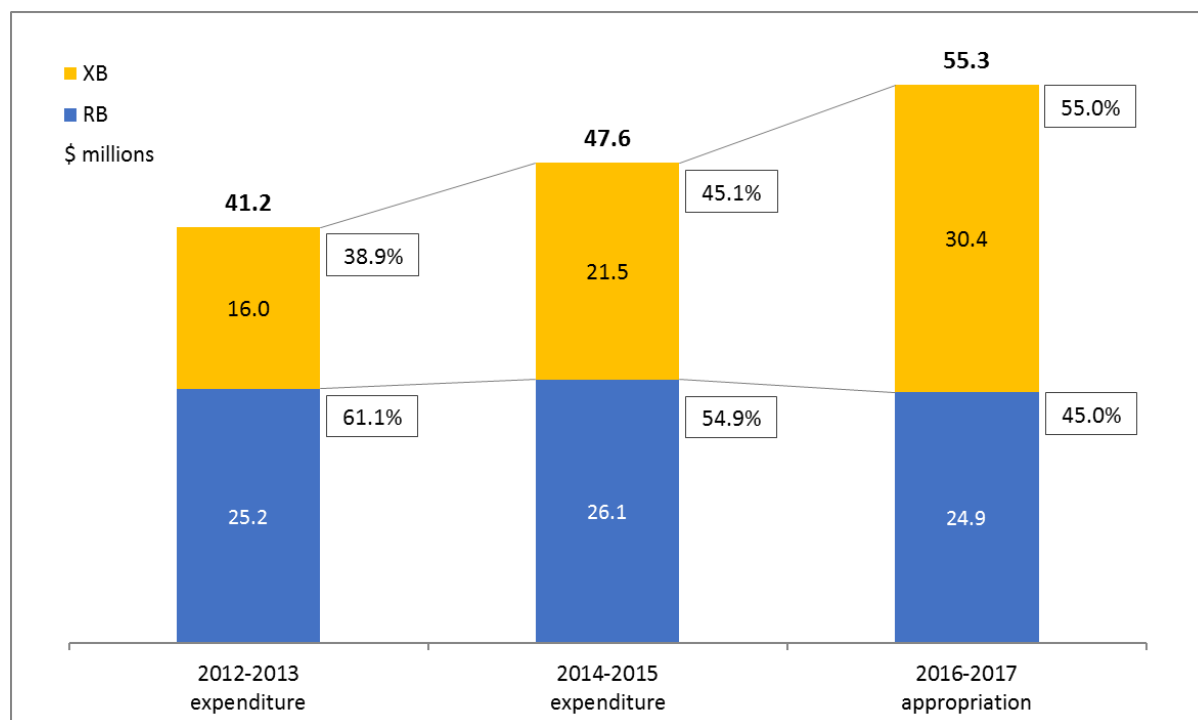
Source: OIOS-IED synthesis of A/70/6(Sect.4) and A/72/6(Sect.4)/Corr.1

13.   At the time of the evaluation, UNODA maintained 60 established RB posts and four XB posts. Table 2 provides an overview of UNODA posts from 2012-2013 to 2018-2019. In 2012-2017,

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[17] A/68/6/Add.1, A/70/6/Add.1.

established RB posts for UNODA were, on average, 8.16 per cent of those for political affairs, and 0.60 cent of those for the United Nations Secretariat.[18]

Table 2: Distribution of UNODA post resources, 2012-2019

Budget component		2012-2013		2014-2015		2016-2017		2018-2019	
		RB	XB	RB	XB	RB	XB	RB	XB
Executive direction and management		8	-	12	-	12	-	11	-
Programme of work									
Subprogramme 1	Multilateral negotiations	8	-	7	-	7	-	7	2
Subprogramme 2	Weapons of mass destruction	8	-	9	-	7	-	7	-
Subprogramme 3	Conventional arms	10	-	7	-	7	-	7	1
Subprogramme 4	Information and outreach	8	-	9	-	9	-	9	-
Subprogramme 5	Regional disarmament								
	Regional Activities Unit	7	-	3	-	5	-	5	-
	Vienna Office	-	1	-	2	-	2	1	1
	UNREC	4	-	3	-	4	-	4	-
	UNRCPD	3	-	3	-	3	-	3	-
	UNLIREC	3	-	3	-	3	-	3	-
Programme support		3	-	4	-	4	-	3	-
Subtotal		62	1	60	2	61	2	60	4
Total		**63**		**62**		**63**		**64**	

Source: OIOS-IED synthesis of A/66/6(Sect.4), A/68/6(Sect.4), A/70/6(Sect.4) and A/72/6(Sect.4)

Operating context

14.   UNODA operates in a highly volatile political and security environment.[19] Armed conflicts peaked in 2015-2016, with an average of roughly 50 conflicts per year.[20] Continued pursuit of nuclear technologies and WMD continued to create tensions at the political and technical levels, and flout disarmament norms. At the same time, military expenditures increased by 0.4 per cent from 2015 to 2016. Overall, military expenditures amounted to roughly $1,686 billion in 2016,[21] while illicit trade in small arms and ammunition continued to pose serious threats to international security and hamper the achievement of the SDGs. In addition, the rapid development – and weaponisation – of new technologies constitute a pressing challenge to the disarmament mandate and international peace and stability.

Scope and purpose

15.   Owing to the extended period since the last OIOS evaluation of UNODA,[22] this evaluation was a full-programme evaluation, covering all areas of UNODA work from 2014-2017. The evaluation answered the following overarching questions:

  a. **Relevance.** (i) To what extent did UNODA identify and respond to stakeholder needs and priorities? (ii) What was its value-add?
  b. **Effectiveness.** To what extent did UNODA normative, technical assistance and advocacy and outreach work contributed to expected outcomes in each of these areas (e.g., effective

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[18] A/68/6/Add.1; A/70/6/Add.1.
[19] Review of High Representative speeches.
[20] Stockholm International Peace and Research Institute (SIPRI) Yearbook 2017 summary – Regional Distribution of Armed Conflict, page 3.
[21] SIPRI Yearbook 2017 summary, page 12.
[22] E/AC.51/1999/2; E/AC.51/2002/6.

negotiations and deliberations, increased capacity and enhanced understanding and awareness of disarmament and non-proliferation issues)?

   c. **Efficiency.** How adeptly did UNODA use its resources and other inputs to fulfil its mandate?

   d. **Cross-cutting issues.** (i) What key internal and external factors helped or hindered UNODA achieve maximum relevance, effectiveness and efficiency? (ii) How successfully did UNODA incorporate gender and human rights considerations into its work? (iii) How systematically did UNODA align its work with the SDGs?

III.   Methodology

16.   The evaluation employed a mixed-method approach featuring the following data sources:

   a) **Structured document review**, e.g., of statements of the High Representative and of representatives of Member States, regional organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) at the First Committee[23] and the CD; relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions; numerous UNODA publications and reports;

   b) **Secondary analysis of UNODA databases and programme performance and budgetary data**, e.g., the Register of Conventional Arms (ROCA), Report on Military Expenditures, and Disarmament Treaties Database; Integrated Management and Document Information System (IMDIS); proposed programme budgets; reports on status of contributions of disarmament conventions; relevant Secretary-General reports;

   c) **Web-based survey** of 123 UNODA staff representing all operational units;[24]

   d) **Semi-structured interviews** with 60 staff, representing all UNODA units; 45 Member State representatives and government officials; 35 external partners; and

   e) **Direct observations** of 13 multilateral negotiations and technical assistance activities[25] led or supported by UNODA, including by each of the regional centres, and encompassing all thematic areas (WMD, CA, and I&O).

17.   The evaluation faced two main limitations: (i) low response rate to the staff survey in one operational unit;[26] and (ii) few opportunities for extended interviews with participants of technical assistance activities. The evaluation addressed the first challenge by strengthening triangulation through interviews with staff from the low-response unit,[27] which corroborated the survey results. The second challenge was addressed by reviewing the feedback participants provided UNODA through post-technical assistance surveys.

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[23] 71st and 72nd sessions.
[24] 52.0 per cent response rate.
[25] Observation of seven multilateral negotiation events.
[26] Three out of 22 staff (13.6 per cent).
[27] Nineteen out of 22 staff (86.4 per cent) interviewed in person.

IV.   Evaluation Results

A. The UNODA programme of work was consistent with its mandate and largely responsive to stakeholder needs, and its role as a trusted, impartial broker was recognised as its key comparative advantage

Programme of work broadly consistent with mandate and responsive to stakeholder needs

18.   Considering its volatile operating context, UNODA remained highly relevant at the broadest programmatic level. Beyond this level, document review verified that all UNODA outputs and activities undertaken across its three pillars were also consistent with its mandate.

19.   Evidence suggested that UNODA was highly responsive to stakeholder needs and expectations. Interviewed delegates to the CD and First Committee, for example, reported that UNODA had provided the required technical support and advice to enable their discussions and deliberations. Similarly, interviewed and surveyed participants in UNODA technical assistance interventions reported that these were relevant to their needs and in line with requests for assistance. All normative, technical assistance and information activities observed and reviewed were in line with the UNODA mandate and, where applicable, with stakeholders' expressed requirements. First Committee resolutions confirmed the importance and significance of UNODA work under each pillar, and the relevance of this work in helping them to deliberate, negotiate and implement disarmament mandates.[28] Surveyed staff mirrored this sentiment: out of 40 respondents, 22 agreed strongly and 17 agreed somewhat that UNODA had responded to all requests from Member States; out of 46 respondents, 15 considered UNODA technical assistance to have always supported its mandate, and 27 considered so most of the time.

20.   As one indicative measure of the alignment between the work of UNODA and Member State priorities, a review of statements in the First Committee indicated that the seven most frequently mentioned issues discussed by Member States directly corresponded with those falling within the remit of UNODA. Figure 3 underlines this alignment.

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[28] A/RES/71/74-77.

Figure 3: Number of thematic mentions in First Committee, 2016-2017 [29]

		2016	2017	Total
Nuclear weapons		88	89	**177**
Small arms and light weapons (SALW)		68	57	**125**
Conventional weapons		54	58	**112**
Arms trade		53	48	**101**
Chemical weapons		44	52	**96**
Terrorists and armaments		41	47	**88**
Biological weapons		39	44	**83**

782 mentions
70% of total

		2016	2017	Total
Anti-personnel landmines		38	41	**79**
Missiles		24	52	**76**
Cluster munitions		29	22	**51**
Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)			33	**33**
Improvised explosive devices (IED)		17	13	**30**
Explosive remnants of war (ERW)		14	9	**23**
Negative security assurances			16	**16**
Explosive weapons		5	10	**15**
Unexploded ordnances (UXO)		5	6	**11**
Mines other than anti-personnel mines (MOTAPM)		3		**3**

337 mentions
30% of total

■ 2016 ■ 2017

Source: OIOS-IED review of UN General Assembly records, First Committee for the 71st and 72nd sessions

Impartial broker role viewed as key comparative advantage

21.   The United Nations has historically embodied a clear normative agenda on disarmament-related issues. Stakeholder interviewees overwhelmingly agreed that, in implementing its mandate within this broad normative framework, UNODA had earned a reputation for impartiality, thus affording it a key comparative advantage as a trusted, credible partner. Specific ways in which UNODA brought this impartial perspective to bear included its: (1) secretariat support to facilitating the deliberations on disarmament; (2) provision of historical perspective and institutional memory; and (3) provision of technical support, knowledge and capacity-building. UNODA staff surveyed likewise assessed themselves as being impartial in the delivery of their mandate.[30]

B.   Despite the broad relevance of its overall programme of work, UNODA lacked a deliberate, systematic and holistic approach to strategic planning, hindering its potential for maximum relevance

22.   UNODA has implemented a far-reaching mandate in a complex and volatile peace and security arena. In its normative pillar, it supported multilateral discussions, facilitated agreements, and supported the capacities of countries to better negotiate and implement global agreements in a diverse array of operating contexts, from facilitating meetings of the First Committee in New York to

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[29] Period truncated owing to time and resource limitations.
[30] Of 42 respondents, 26 (61.9 per cent) agreed strongly and 12 (28.6 per cent) agreed somewhat that UNODA provided politically neutral support; out of 39 respondents, 25 (64.1 per cent) agreed strongly and 12 (30.8 per cent) agreed somewhat that UNODA provided legally sound advice.

supporting the CD in Geneva. In its technical assistance pillar, it built capacity through its education, dissemination and fellowship programmes in numerous issue areas and in widely divergent contexts – from supporting largely growing middle-income economies regions where there is very little conflict yet security issues and conventional arms were key challenges (e.g., Latin America) to regions where diverse economies, conflict and post-conflict issues; humanitarian crisis and development dynamics increasingly affected the response and priorities (e.g., Africa) and regions where population, economic and language diversity and rising inequality prevailed (e.g., Asia).

23.   Further adding to this complexity is the broad stakeholder landscape within which UNODA implemented its work programme. In its normative and technical assistance work, it supported individual Member States with widely divergent agendas and thematic needs, and did so with a relatively meagre budget. UNODA also operated alongside a growing number of NGOs and civil society organisations (CSOs) working on similar areas of work as UNODA – each with its own goals, often with overlap and in mutual competition with one another and with UNODA for the attention of decision-makers. In addition, UNODA was called on to coordinate its work with other international and regional organisations as well as United Nations specialised agencies and entities in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation,[31] including through the Inter-Agency Task Force on Security Sector Reform, the Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security, and the Armed Violence Prevention and Reduction multiagency programme and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

24.   This multi-subprogramme, multi-thematic, multi-function, and multi-location nature of UNODA illustrates the complexity of its operating environment and the challenges it faced in delivering its mandate.[32] Against this backdrop, it produced a work programme with a wide range of relevant outputs, within its niche of impartiality and specialised technical remit (See result A). At the same time, UNODA lacked a deliberate, systematic, holistic and detailed approach to strategic planning – one that, in view of these complexities, would help its work programme not merely be *consistent with* its mandate, but rather one that is *most critical* to fulfilling its mandate and *most likely to contribute* meaningfully to disarmament efforts, given its comparative advantage, limited resources, and global needs and issues. Like all Secretariat programmes, UNODA followed the formal strategic framework and programme budget processes. Unlike other Secretariat programmes, however, it did not undertake this detailed level of strategic planning work to help it more concretely articulate how it would deliver its work programme – what it would and would not prioritise moving forward, and how it would achieve targeted results – in the most effective, efficient and relevant ways in the face of its multifaceted contexts, complexities, challenges, niche, assets, opportunities, and relevant trends. Its Strategic Planning Unit, embedded within the Office of the High Representative, was not leading this type of strategic planning process; rather, it was mainly focused on analyses of emerging issues. (See result E).

25.   Given this strategic planning gap at the broad institutional level, at the subprogramme level individual organisational units' workplans were likewise lacking a systematic, strategic approach to planning. All offices and operational units possessed workplans of some type, but these varied in quality and detail. The regional centres' workplans were largely output-oriented, with very little reference to systematic analysis of needs and priorities – or a results-oriented approach, including implementation strategies or resource mobilisation needs. Out of the three regional centres,

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[31] Cooperation includes the African Union and the Organisation of African States, and numerous subregional organisations.
[32] Overall goal is general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

UNLIREC had developed the most comprehensive strategic plan for the last two cycles, although even this plan lacked specificity related to needs, complementarities and synergies. In this same vein, branch workplans and functional areas lacked clarity on synergies and complementarities. In interviews, staff acknowledged that some cross-branch complementarity and collaboration occurred; however, examples of specific, regular and ongoing synergies were not forthcoming. Workplan reviews confirmed that functions and branches lacked precision in how they supported and complemented each other's work, and specifically how they aligned to the programme vision, strategy and disarmament priorities.[33]

26.   Furthermore, while the activities and outputs delivered in each UNODA location were relevant to its mandate and stakeholder needs (see result A), these were frequently undertaken in a dispersed, siloed and in some cases narrowly conceived manner, without deliberate attempts at cross-reference with other corners of UNODA – or linkage to a broad UNODA vision or set of objectives – with a view to achieving maximum institutional relevance or maximum institutional results. For example, the Vienna Office was focused almost entirely on the women in disarmament initiative, with very little cross-fertilization with regional centres that were undertaking similar initiatives. Similarly, the UNLIREC focus on arms control and illicit trafficking of arms was undertaken with no real cross-referencing with UNREC activities on small arms and light weapons (SALW). While UNODA anecdotally noted progress in collaboration between substantive branches and RDB, including the coordination of joint projects for specific topics, there were individual instances where UNODA relevance was suboptimal when thematic subprogrammes focused more on logistical or travel arrangements for delegates to meetings, rather than on substantive analyses to support these meetings. As a result, the disparate corners of UNODA missed opportunities not only to align themselves around a shared vision and set of targeted results, but rather also to do so in a organisationally coherent, well-coordinated way – e.g., by maximising the distinct assets, strategic partnerships and comparative advantage of each organisational unit, to achieve a "sum greater than its parts."[34]

27.   In October 2017, UNODA senior management undertook a visioning exercise to critically assess UNODA roles and functions. This initiative signalled the Office of the High Representative's willingness to chart a clearer, nimbler strategic course. Although no physical output emerged from this meeting to indicate what concrete follow-on steps would take place to translate its key takeaways into concrete action, in early 2018, the Secretary-General launched a New Disarmament Agenda with the active involvement of the High Representative. This initiative represented a milestone which could ensure that this critical aspect of the United Nations Charter remains a visible component of the Secretary-General's agenda moving forward – and a potential remedial step to counter disarmament's absence from the restructuring of the peace and security pillar of the United Nations.[35] This broader organisational initiative presented a potential opportunity for UNODA to follow suit and revisit its work through more systematic, creative strategic planning, framed around

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[33] E.g., how and when global agreements were followed up with technical assistance in support of implementation; how the information and outreach function supported and used the regional centres to enhance the dissemination of disarmament information; how the regional gaps and needs analysis informed technical assistance decisions and potentially the Fellowships Programme selection process; or how the technical assistance delivery drove dissemination efforts or supported the normative work.

[34] Examples of detailed strategic plans – well informed by global and regional trends, needs and gaps – are increasingly common in the United Nations Secretariat as tools for strengthening accountability and learning, achieving efficiencies in the face of resource limitations, and supporting resource mobilization efforts.

[35] A/72/525.

the New Disarmament Agenda and other key normative frameworks (see result E), as well as its Strategic Framework.

C. UNODA successfully delivered on most of the outputs of its programme of work; however, the results of this work were only partly known, owing in part to a long-standing lack of systematic outcome-level monitoring, self-evaluation and reporting

28. A review of IMDIS data[36] suggested that UNODA delivered its programme of work at consistently high implementation rates – i.e., 89.0 per cent of 1,930 programmed outputs in 2014-2015 and 87.0 per cent of 1,876 outputs in 2016-2017 – with the remaining 11.0 and 13.0 per cent, respectively, having been postponed or terminated for legislative reasons.[37] Examples of its many outputs in each of its three functional areas showed that UNODA:

- facilitated 1,120 outputs/sessions of the disarmament machinery, including the provision of 1,593 parliamentary documents to the CD, First Committee and Disarmament Commission, among others;
- delivered at least 105 technical assistance outputs from 2014-2017, including 55 activities promoting dialogue and 36 awareness-raising events; and
- provided 194 information and outreach outputs, e.g., disarmament campaigns, exhibitions, events, and distribution of publications.

29. Although UNODA delivered its work programme in all thematic areas and functions, evidence of immediate, medium or long-term outcomes was not systematically or consistently available. This gap was in part due to the inherently unpredictable and frequently tumultuous international security climate in which UNODA operates (see paras. 14 and 23), where progress in the disarmament arena lies far outside its control. Within the normative pillar, all interviewed delegations highlighted the difficulty of reaching agreements or making any measurable disarmament progress, given that national security considerations take precedence over any well-intentioned efforts at reaching consensus on disarmament. Within the technical assistance pillar, interviewees acknowledged that no multilateral agreement could be successful unless norms are effectively implemented and enforced. In this vein, while some capacity might have been built in the short term, longer-term institutional capacity-building was viewed as requiring stronger institutional arrangements and sustained support. Finally, within the information and outreach pillar, awareness-raising and attitudinal changes were seen as requiring robust, sustained, multi-pronged efforts, and even then, these effects are not guaranteed because attitudes are often resistant to change. All told, therefore, measurement of UNODA effectiveness was elusive.

30. Despite these inherent challenges, there is some evidence that UNODA made noteworthy contributions in each of its three functional areas, as shown below.

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[36] Official output count, as per the PPBME, which avoids differentiation between output types.
[37] Largely due to the cancellation of meetings to intergovernmental bodies such as the Conference on Disarmament and others.

Normative contributions to decisions and resolutions of intergovernmental bodies

31.   UNODA helped facilitate adoption of 230 resolutions and 13 decisions under the deliberations of the First Committee from 2014-2017. In this respect, UNODA supported 2,315 action points as part of these resolutions and decisions: 677 calling for Member State action, 253 calling for the Secretary-General's action, 188 calling for general action, 66 calling for CD or Disarmament Commission action, 500 noting progress on results, 359 acknowledging issues, and 272 noting other disarmament action. Figure 4 illustrates the number of resolutions and decisions by year and Figure 5 by thematic area.

Figure 4: Total number of resolutions and decisions, 2014-2016

RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS BY YEAR

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of Resolutions	57	55	64	54
Number of Decisions	6	2	5	0
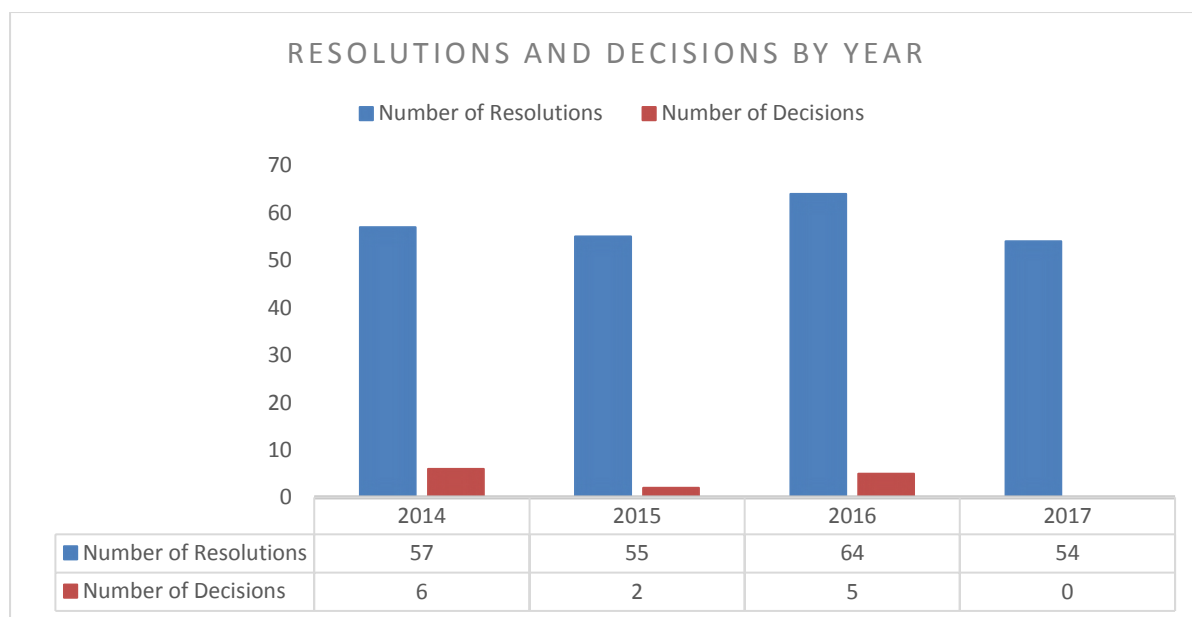
Figure 5: First Committee resolutions and decisions, 2014-2016
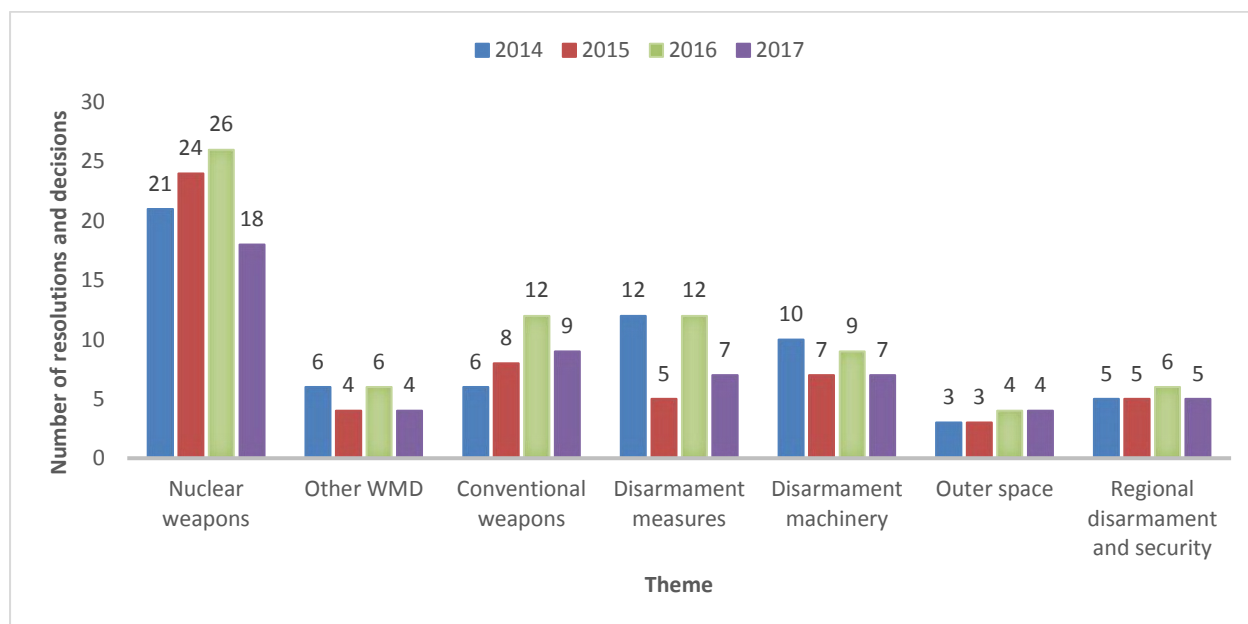
Source: First Committee deliberations (69th–71st sessions)

32.   With respect to global norms, UNODA facilitated discussion and agreement of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). In this area, while Member States acknowledged that the CD was locked in a stalemate for decades (see para. 29), they noted that the disarmament machinery was not intended to be a "treaty factory," but rather a "beacon for disarmament" with inestimable value. They noted the importance of the High Representative and the Secretary-General's leadership in revitalising the disarmament debate, helping to interconnect disparate disarmament fora and promoting dialogue and conversation through connection and dissemination. Within this context, they acknowledged the role of UNODA as an impartial facilitator and expressed appreciation for its support promoting dialogue and discussion in the CD and other fora.[38]

Technical assistance contributions to capacity

33.   Interviews at observed workshops suggested that a majority of participants considered these events to be useful. Regional centres' own survey data showed that 78 per cent of surveyed workshop participants expressed satisfaction with the quality and usefulness of their capacity-building interventions.[39] Document reviews suggested that at least 42 countries had reported strengthening their institutional capacities and that at least 830 government officials' technical skills were reportedly strengthened by capacity building in areas such as arms control, forensic ballistics, private security, and WMD, including on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540. Advisory services on private security protocols, Security Council resolution 1540, and arms control reportedly informed national legislation drafts as well.[40]

34.   On marking, tracing, stockpile management and destruction of small arms, UNODA facilitated the integration and implementation of 17 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) into national systems, including improvements on the working conditions of firearm examiners. It claimed that its training of 1,450 government officials and assistance to relevant authorities in five countries contributed to the destruction of at least 62,000 small arms and more than 62 tons of ammunition, marking of 1,400 and secondary marking of more than 500. In line with SDG 16, in one country UNODA reportedly raised awareness of 800 adolescents about the dangers of firearms and assistance on a peace and disarmament education project and it was incorporated into school curricula, reaching around 500,000 school children, half of these girls. Under the Fellowship Programme, UNODA trained diplomats and delegations from some 100 developing nations, presumably enhancing their institutional and negotiation capacities.

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[38] The lack of a negative outcome in seven decades, proposals for growth in its membership, and acknowledgement by Member States that UNODA facilitation is useful in continuing the dialogue and discussion attest to its continued value and existence.

[39] IMDIS records 2014-2017, indicator of achievement data.

[40] Observations and interviews in Abuja, Bangkok, Lima, Lomé, Santo Domingo.

Information and outreach contributions to knowledge and awareness

35.   Document reviews suggested that outreach interventions possibly contributed to awareness of, and interest in, disarmament. Website traffic totalled an average of 47,000 visits per month. Overall, topics garnering the most attention were: arms trade, use of chemical weapons, and the TPNW. Press and media covered at least 74 disarmament-related stories. Increasing requests for distribution of the disarmament digest by disarmament practitioners further suggested increased interest and/or awareness.

Insufficient outcome-level monitoring, self-evaluation and reporting

36.   Beyond these anecdotal assessments of UNODA work , tangible outcome-level evidence of the results of its work was not forthcoming – e.g., that UNODA action directly influenced agreements, resolutions and policies and their implementation, and that such implementation resulted in concrete disarmament gains; that its technical assistance built institutional capacity in the medium and long term; or that its information and outreached actually enhanced awareness and knowledge among key decision-makers (and those who seek to influence them) in any way. While UNODA had some instruments in place to collect performance data, including outcome indicators and reports, many of these did not report on outcomes or fell short of providing a comprehensive picture of what UNODA was and was not achieving (and why) across its work programme. Specific gaps included the following:

- o   Available project reports were mostly descriptive and provided reflections on the *expectation* that certain outcomes would be achieved, but seldom mentioned results actually achieved, let alone evidence to support claims of results.
- o   Regional centres lacked logical frameworks and associated results indicators to assess their performance, and their annual reports were output-oriented, with minimal reference to results.
- o   Subprogrammes possessed logical frameworks and results indicators, but these were likewise largely output-oriented and had limited results data.
- o   Follow-up with Fellowship Programme participants to assess long-term effects was sporadic, selective, and not systematic.
- o   Workshop participants, like Fellowship Programme participants were not systematically traced to assess skills development and use.
- o   There was no user survey data on UNODA publication work, including on the disarmament information programme.
- o   Social media use and data were not leveraged to their full potential.

37.   In addition to not having the mechanisms to collect outcome data, self-evaluation practices to systematically assess UNODA programme performance were absent. There were nominal self-evaluation efforts beyond the formal compliance and mandatory self-reporting. At the subprogramme level, there were basic outcome assessment instruments to assess and discuss areas for improvement. This was also the case at the regional level. According to the OIOS-IED Biennial M&E dashboard, while UNODA had recently adopted an evaluation policy, it was not implemented. There was no evaluation plan, no evaluation function and its monitoring and evaluation budget was marginal, i.e., 0.015 per cent of the UNODA budget, and even so, no evaluation outputs were

documented. Despite the programme's reliance on XB resources, donor-funded evaluations were limited as well. Given the capacity constraints UNODA faced, these gaps are not surprising; they nonetheless render UNODA a negative outlier in the Secretariat evaluation landscape, a status further brought into relief by the Secretary-General management reform effort, with its calls for strengthened self-evaluation focused on results and accountability and as a tool to strengthen management, learning and performance assessment for improved effectiveness.[41]

D. UNODA implemented its workplan before the backdrop of a broad mandate coupled with unstable resources; however, it did not fully harness its considerable internal assets, structures and functions, or external partnerships to achieve maximum results within its existing resources

Work programme delivered with comparatively small budget; growing reliance on XB funds and short-term contracts created resource instability

38.   Budgetary resources at the disposal of UNODA were small in comparison to most Secretariat programmes, yet UNODA delivered 3,350 outputs in 2014-2017. As Figures 6 and 7 illustrate, UNODA accomplished a considerable portion of its core programme of work with increasing dependence on XB resources, most notably for the WMD and regional disarmament subprogrammes. The inherently uncertain delivery of these resources created instability in these subprogrammes' delivery, and thus for UNODA more broadly. Annual variations in voluntary contributions to the trust funds for Regional Centres reinforced this volatility at the regional level. Figure 8 speaks to this trend.

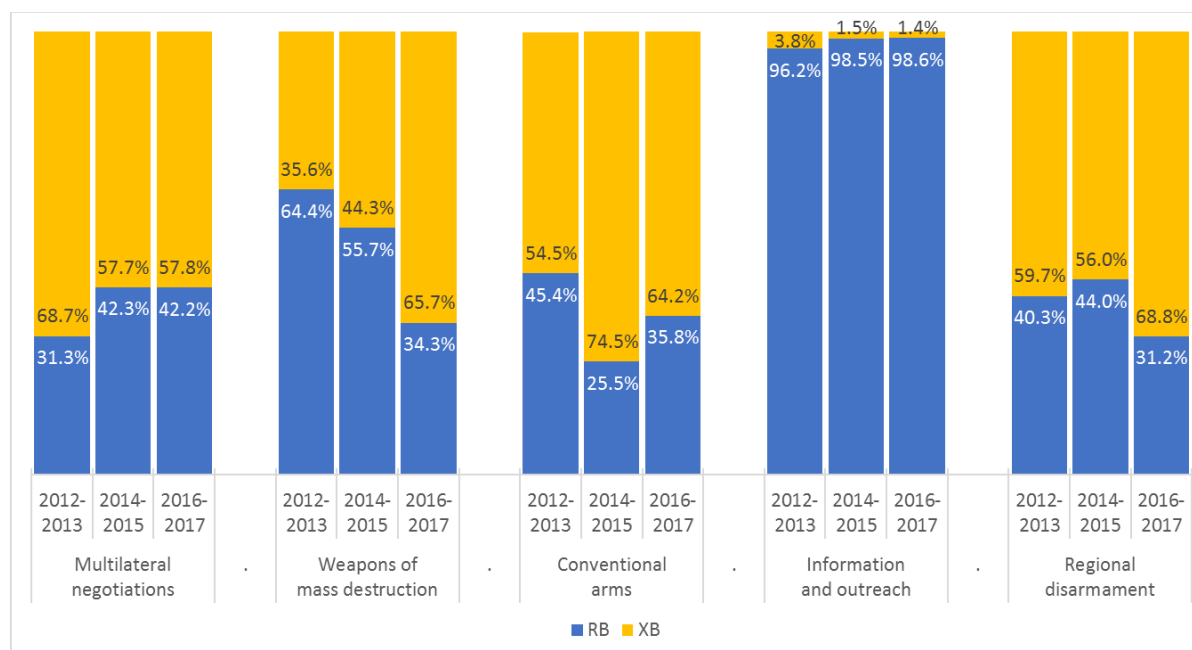[41] A/72/492, paras. 103-105.

Figure 6: Funding of UNODA programme components, by RB and XB, 2012-2017 (in %)
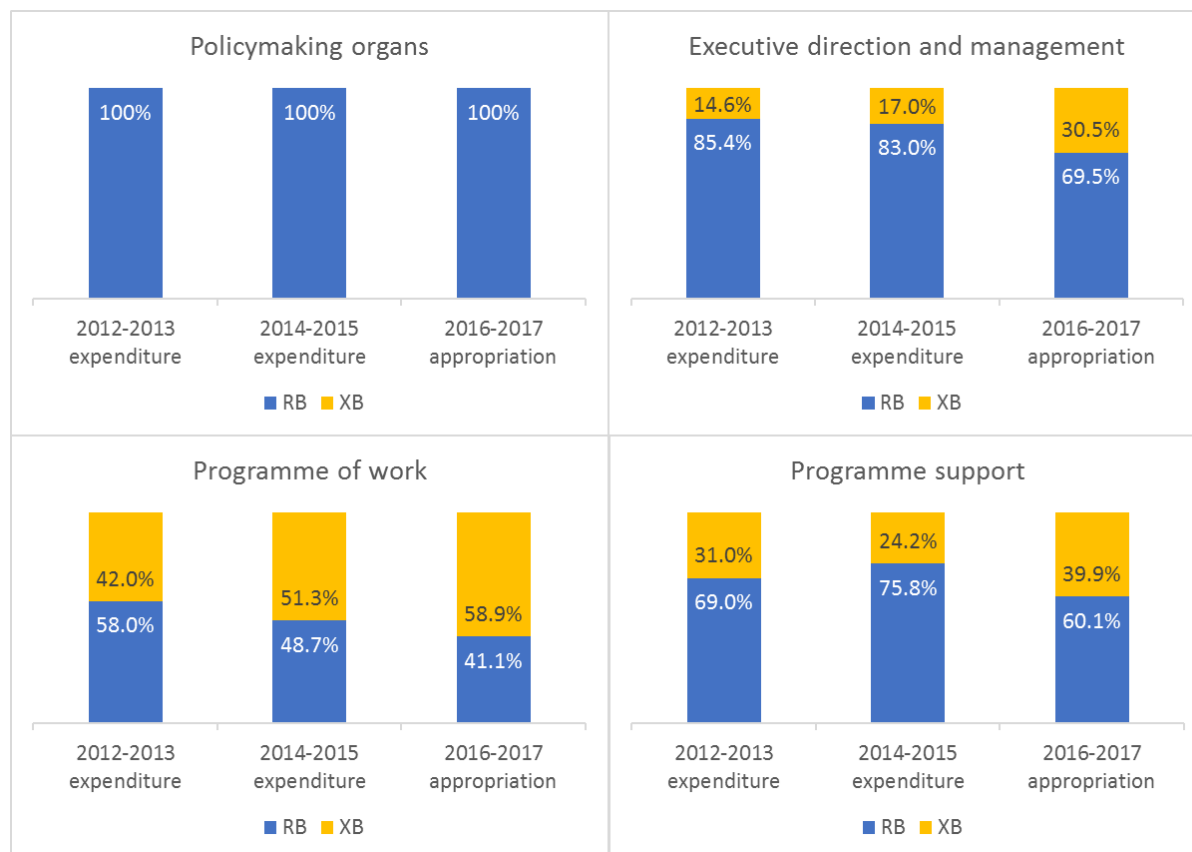
Source: OIOS-IED synthesis of A/70/6(Sect.4) and A/72/6(Sect.4)/Corr.1
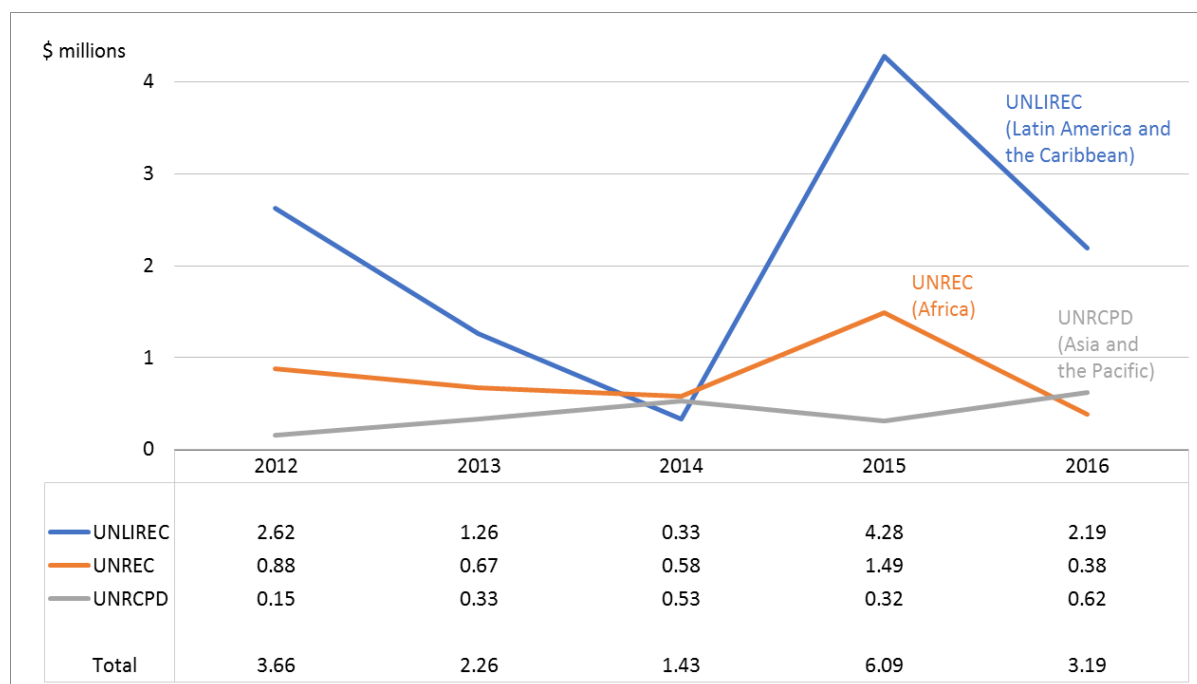*Note: See Figure 1 for absolute figures*

Figure 7: Funding of UNODA subprogrammes by RB and XB, 2012-2017 appropriation (in %)

Source: OIOS-IED synthesis of A/68/6(Sect.4), A/70/6(Sect.4) and A/72/6(Sect.4)

Figure 8: Voluntary contributions to Regional Centres' trust funds, 2012-2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
UNLIREC	2.62	1.26	0.33	4.28	2.19
UNREC	0.88	0.67	0.58	1.49	0.38
UNRCPD	0.15	0.33	0.53	0.32	0.62
Total	3.66	2.26	1.43	6.09	3.19

Source: OIOS-IED synthesis of reports of the Secretary-General on the Regional Centres
Note: Final 2017 data pending

39.   Interviews in the three Regional Centres and in Vienna confirmed that XB resources were critical for the delivery of these offices' core workplan. Little could have been achieved solely with RB-funded posts, which were no more than four per location (see Table 2). A large proportion of voluntary contributions supported non-post human resources (such as consultants and individual contractors), varying from four individuals at UNRCPD to 19 at UNLIREC.[42] These individuals mostly provided technical assistance and advisory services to Member States in the regions, and were responsible for the disarmament education programme in Vienna.

40.   Despite the importance of these individuals for the delivery of the UNODA work programme, their contracts were often short in duration (as short as three months) and highly unstable, with their renewal not always secured. This scenario was also characteristic of projects which intrinsically took longer to be well designed and effectively delivered, and for thematic programmes, which often demanded a long-term approach in order to harvest results. Staff and external stakeholders emphasised the toll this situation exacted on output delivery, the corresponding risk to results achievement, and the impact on contractors' personal lives.

41.   At the Geneva Branch, a similar situation was aggravated in part by delays in the payment of XB contributions. Arrears from Member States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) (see Table 3) jeopardised these bodies' mandates and the very existence of their ISUs, particularly the CCW. This problem lingered for years, but only surfaced officially after the adoption of International Public Sector Accounting Standards and Umoja. Specifically, the CCW High Contracting parties took measures to circumvent untimely payments, e.g., by suspending translation and interpretation services and cancelling one year's meetings outright to prioritise staff contracts over States parties' meetings. However, the risk of

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[42] A/70/6(Sect.4) and UNODA staff list (1 November 2017).

stalled functioning only increased: in late 2017, the two CCW ISU staff contracts could not be renewed, and the unit would henceforth only function if other parts of UNODA subsidised its operation by ceding staff – a solution which ran contrary to the UN financial rules and regulations. Document review and interviews suggested that this situation generated financial and reputational liabilities for the Secretariat of the Conventions and ultimately for UNODA.[43]

Table 3: States parties' arrears to ISUs (in $)

	CCW	*BWC*	*Total*
Arrears up to 2016 (A)	48,005.92	82,354.28	**130,360.20**
Arrears in 2017 (B)	19,002.55	62,650.33	**81,652.88**
Total arrears up to 2017 (C = A+ B)	*67,008.47*	*145,004.61*	***212,013.08***
Overpayments (D)	3,673.04	568,812.45	**572,485.49**
Net cash (= D - C)	*(63,335.43)*	*423,807.84*	*360,472.41*
Increase in arrears in 2017 (= B / A)	40%	76%	**63%**
Arrears compensated with overpayments (= D / C)	5%	392%	**270%**

Source: OIOS-IED synthesis of UNOG-FRMS
Notes: Status of contributions as at 1 January 2018. Bills and payments for 2018 conferences not included.

With no centralised fundraising support, offices away from headquarters frequently left to ensure their own work programmes' continuation

42.   Fundraising efforts by the Regional Centres – a function built into their mandates[44] –were diverse, and produced mixed results during the period evaluated. First, resource mobilisation strategies varied from non-existent in some cases to well-developed, clear and concise in others, with larger regional centres being above to devote capacity to resource mobilisation in the first instance – and thus able to raise more resources. (That said, divergent geopolitical contexts and donors' foreign policy influenced offices' resource mobilisation success as well.) Second, resources did not always accrue based on pre-identified, evidence-based needs or on potential impact assessment, but rather on opportunity. In interviews and direct observations, no activities funded by these resources were deemed irrelevant outright. However, this situation reflected a donor-led, ad hoc approach to UNODA activities, rather than a systematic analysis of the various security situations and scenarios directing technical assistance design and its associated resource mobilisation (see para. 24). Third, as per Figure 8, voluntary contributions did not flow equally to the three centres, or in proportion to any variable such as population or geographic area covered.

43.   A small donor base exacerbated the vulnerability of the regional centres. In 2014-2016,[45] 21 countries and seven international organisations donated to the regional centres' trust funds, out of which only 11 countries and one international organisation did so more than once. Three countries provided 69.3 per cent of these voluntary contributions. Alongside two international organisations, they supplied 81.8 per cent of these resources. Steep declines seen in Figure 8, such as for UNLIREC in 2014 and 2016, and for UNREC in 2016, were the result of reduced or discontinued contributions from these five top donors.

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[43] Previously addressed in OIOS-IAD Report 2014/109.
[44] See e.g. A/RES/40/151G, A/RES/41/60J, A/RES/42/39D.
[45] Final 2017 data pending.

44.   Thus, while autonomous fundraising worked well in some instances, in others, staff indicated that centres and other XB-dependent structures such as the ISUs could have benefitted from headquarters support. Potential areas of assistance they cited included: needs assessment, costing of activities, formulation and presentation of proposals to donors (including in a joint manner to the same donor), systematisation of donor reporting, and strategies to broaden the sources of voluntary contributions (e.g., by organising donor conferences). Some staff reported that UNODA had experimented with fully centralised fundraising in the past, with disappointing results. There was no evidence, however, that UNODA had systematically reviewed, assessed or evaluated this experiment with a view to fine-tuning it for greater utility. (See paras. 37-38).

Internal collaboration and cooperation not institutionalised

45.   Document review and interviews indicated that UNODA had not taken full advantage of its decentralised, multifaceted structure (see result B). There was evidence of horizontal and vertical collaboration across UNODA units, although it was not always formalised or institutionalised. Interviewees reported the use of regular meetings and teleconferences, but frequently indicated that they were not always sufficient or relevant to align workplans or activity delivery. Interaction between headquarters and other units was sometimes described as having been of low value-add.
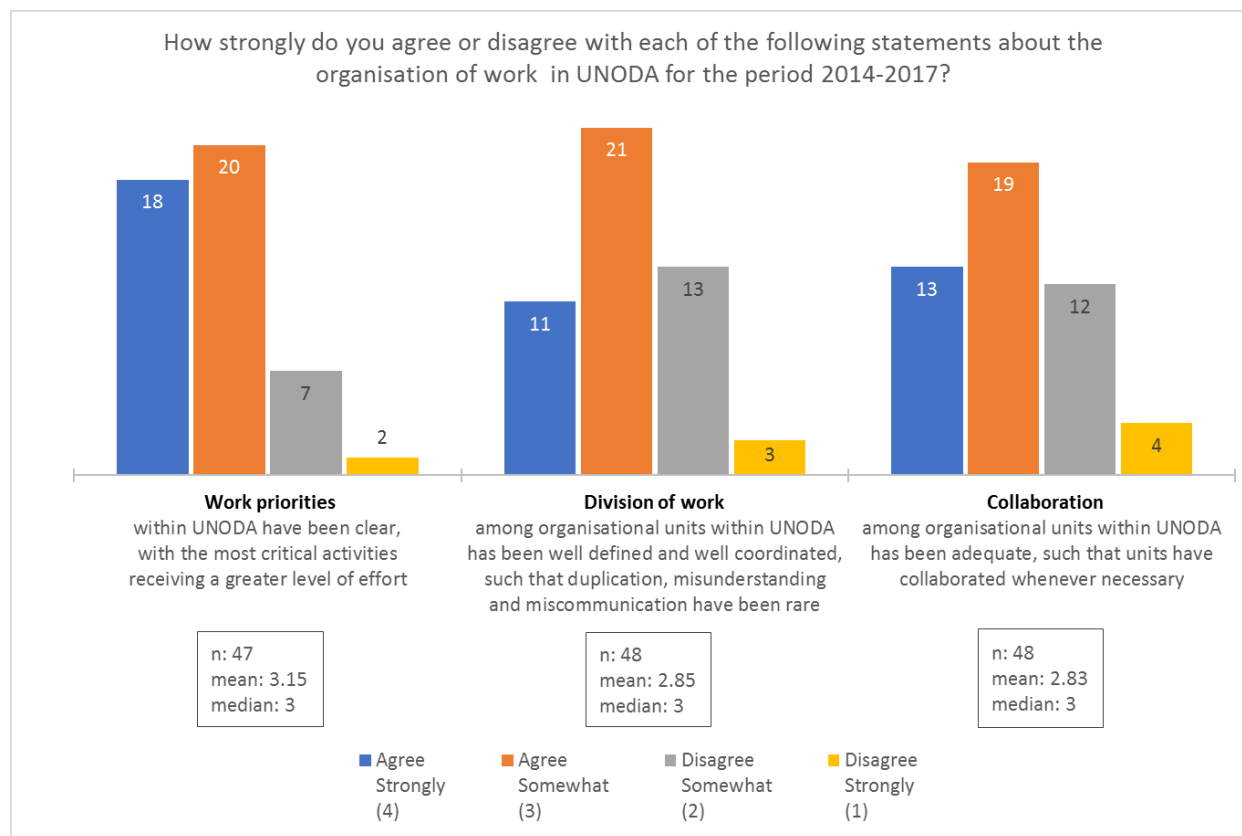
46.   In staff interviews, collaboration was recurrently described in personal terms, instead of in relation to organisational structures or specific mandates of each unit. Whereas this type of interaction is common in small, collegial offices, it can become problematic when staff change posts or leave, or when individuals' personal relations do not lend themselves naturally to collaboration. Staff movements were frequent: out of 49 core staff at beginning of 2014, 14 had changed units by November 2017, and 20 had moved out of UNODA.[46]

47.   At a more fundamental level, there was not full clarity on how UNODA harnessed its existing intangible assets – such as staff skills, knowledge and experience – and the complementarity of its functional areas to more effectively respond to its mandate. Figure 9 illustrates how staff do not see work division and collaboration as favourably as work prioritisation. As noted in result B, although there could be "handover" from facilitation of multilateral negotiations (normative work) and their implementation (in the form of technical assistance), there was little to no evidence of coordination in practice, which possibly limited more effective responses to the needs of Member States and other stakeholders (see paras. 24 ff.).

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[46] ST/ADM/R.68 and UNODA staff list (1 November 2017).

Figure 9: UNODA staff perspective on organisation of work

How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the organisation of work in UNODA for the period 2014-2017?

Work priorities
within UNODA have been clear, with the most critical activities receiving a greater level of effort

n: 47
mean: 3.15
median: 3

Division of work
among organisational units within UNODA has been well defined and well coordinated, such that duplication, misunderstanding and miscommunication have been rare

n: 48
mean: 2.85
median: 3

Collaboration
among organisational units within UNODA has been adequate, such that units have collaborated whenever necessary

n: 48
mean: 2.83
median: 3

■ Agree Strongly (4)　■ Agree Somewhat (3)　■ Disagree Somewhat (2)　■ Disagree Strongly (1)

Source: Staff survey

Partnership opportunities missed

48.　As with internal cooperation, UNODA collaboration with external entities within and outside the UN was intermittent. For example, UNODA was part of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action, led by the United Nations Mine Action Service, and UNLIREC contributed to the United Nations Mission in Colombia, but little else was undertaken with other United Nations peace and security entities. UNODA collaborated with the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate on joint reports and presentations. With the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (including its Special Political Missions), there was no evidence of joint work in analysis, monitoring or evaluation. UNODA claimed to have collaborated with various United Nations entities and external stakeholders through the work of the Geneva Branch and through some inter-agency coordination mechanisms, including chairing the Coordination Action on Small Arms. However, UNODA was absent from the United Nations peace and security pillar reform discussions altogether,[47] a missed opportunity to promote a collaborative disarmament agenda rooted in global security concerns.

49.　Similarly, despite potential for joint work in analysis and technical assistance, both on WMD and conventional arms, joint interventions with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) were localised and sporadic. (See result E). Relationships with United Nations country teams and United Nations Development Programme country offices were frequently described as limited to logistical matters, although there were individual overtures to assist the design of United

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[47] A/72/525.

Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, and to seek linkages with Global Regional Directors Teams and Regional Coordination Mechanisms.

50.   By contrast, UNODA interacted extensively with NGOs and other research institutions both at headquarters and regional levels, contributing to debates surrounding normative work and collaborating formally in the delivery of technical assistance and advisory services. Most staff rated these interactions positively (see Figure 10), and NGO representatives interviewed concurred with this assessment. Nonetheless, joint work with academia and private businesses was incipient. Interviewees suggested that enhanced external partnerships can help UNODA to define its unique roles in a crowded field of disarmament actors (see para. 23) and help deliver its mandate in partnership with others in resource-constrained conditions.

Figure 10: UNODA staff perspective on interaction with external stakeholders
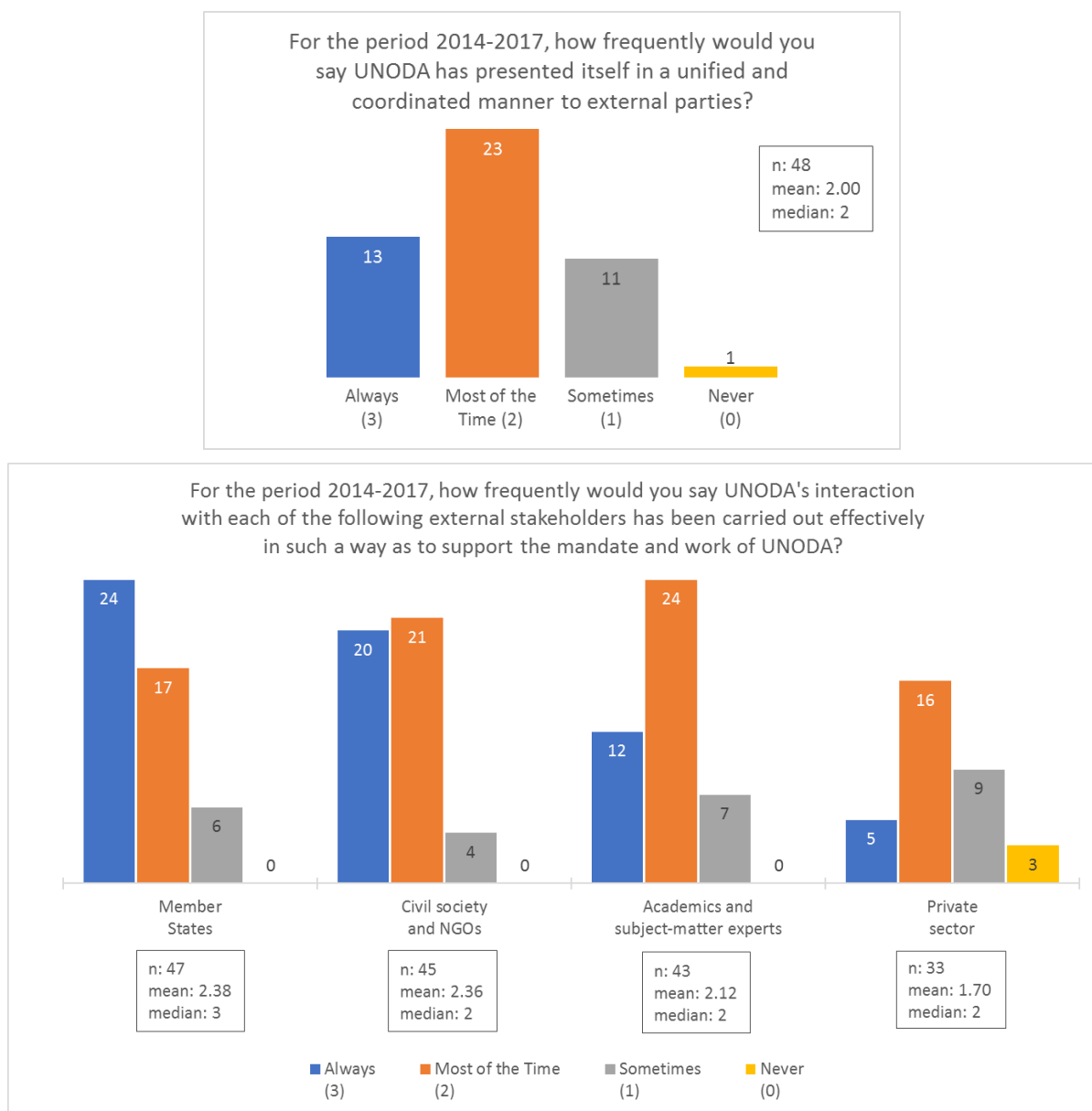
Source: Staff survey

E. While UNODA made some limited contributions to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, it did not systematically frame its work in such a way as to concretely support their implementation; nor did it embrace a clear, explicit and value-added role in contributing to discussions on relevant frontier issues

Some strides in defining its SDG 16 contributions, and in engaging with others toward their realisation, but gaps in embracing co-custodian role and in assisting Member State reporting

51.   As mentioned in various working documents, and recognised by external stakeholders and staff, UNODA occupies a clear role in supporting the achievement of SDG 16 and especially target 16.4: "By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime." Specifically, UNODA was designated co-custodian, together with UNODC, of indicator 16.4.2: "Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments."[48]

52.   In this vein, UNODA started to engage other United Nations entities, Member States, regional organisations, NGOs and academia to define actions for the goal and target, and to clarify concepts surrounding the indicator, as there was no unequivocal interpretation of it. It was likewise unclear whether and how UNODA would facilitate national target-setting, and whether and how it would redirect or reorganise its technical assistance. With regard to the indicator associated with SDG 16, its role as guardian of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All Its Aspects and the ROCA provided UNODA with some of the know-how, tools and stakeholder relationships that can support reporting. However, as a precondition, many national entities expressed the need for capacity-building on data collection and treatment, a need UNODA was still unable to fulfil. Regional centres' initiatives on this front were either non-existent – or exclusively community-based, an approach that might help with local engagement and with broader linkages to development (see para. 34), but is not designed for statistical definition or data collection for national reporting. These initiatives interact with a larger comprehension of the SDGs (see para. 55), but neglect the national reporting aspect. To advance on reporting, UNODA partnered only with UNODC at headquarters and not at regional level, and there was no evidence of partnership with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (i.e., the primary programme tasked with capacity-building for sustainable development policy implementation).

Isolated activities on gender which, though relevant, not articulated in gender action plan

53.   Somewhat less directly, UNODA also has a role in supporting SDG 5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," which in turn is an extension of existing United Nations initiatives on gender mainstreaming.[49] Document review and direct observation suggested that the gender component of disarmament was tangential to the normative work of UNODA, but somewhat more present in technical assistance and outreach activities. On the normative pillar, Member States or civil society generally led the few initiatives that took place. In the other two pillars, UNODA usually dealt with gender in either standalone events and through projects where the gender components were integrated. There was great geographical imbalance in the volume of gender-

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[48] A/RES/71/313 and UNSD Work Plans for Tier III Indicators (24 March 2017).
[49] See, e.g., E/2017/57 and E/RES/2017/9.

related activity, with the Vienna Office and UNLIREC taking the lead. In the Fellowship Programme, 54 of the 100 participants in 2014-2017 were women, the consequences of which might take time to appear.

54.   Although UNODA had a Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan since 2003 (updated in 2016), none of the initiatives in 2014-2017 was explicitly linked to it. Additionally, UNODA recently clarified where the gender focal point structure resides within UNODA.

Contribution to other SDGs not fully explored; approach to frontier issues unclear

55.   As with SDG 5, disarmament work can indirectly support other parts of the 2030 Agenda.[50] The High Representative publicly stressed the importance of UNODA fully embracing the SDGs in its work[51]. Beyond this broad pronouncement, however, document review and interviews revealed that UNODA had not systematically explored its potential contributions to the achievement of SDGs other than SDG 16. Accordingly, alongside its absence of systematic strategic planning (see result B), UNODA did not explicitly frame its work around the SDGs.[52] Some stakeholders indicated that the SDGs could help disarmament be better understood in contexts beyond conflict – e.g., as a matter of crime and law enforcement, human rights, or public health.

56.   Beyond the SDGs, UNODA did not define its position in relation to frontier issues in disarmament.[53] Though strongly debated within and outside the United Nations, these issues were only marginally explored in UNODA, and in a disconnected fashion, despite being one of its core functions. The somewhat unclear leadership role on this task fell on the Strategic Planning Unit; beyond this level, the role and involvement of substantive branches and offices away from headquarters was variable and in some cases unclear. Interviewees suggested that UNODA and UNIDIR enjoyed a positive professional rapport, for example, but there was no clear shared research agenda between the two organisations. Partnerships with other United Nations institutes (such as United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute or United Nations Research Institute for Social Development) were limited.

57.   In the First Committee, Member States and NGOs expressed interest in emerging topics as varied as artificial intelligence, cyber-security, lethal autonomous weapons systems, and threats originated from unlawful non-State actors. Despite the salience of these topics, it was not evident that UNODA played an active role in issues such as preventive diplomacy among States, only a reactive one. UNODA had a more active role on confidence-building issues. Staff emphasised the need for, and importance of, impartiality; however, many internal and external interviewees expressed that, although UNODA is not to determine the disarmament agenda (this being the prerogative of Member States), it could – with no sacrifice to its impartiality or mandate – perform a stronger role in convening actors performing cutting-edge disarmament research. They also indicated that UNODA could be a "brain trust" or "thought leader." This would go beyond providing

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[50] A/RES/70/1, para. 35.
[51] High Representative Speech to the CD – 26 February 2018.
[52] Biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2018-2019 (A/71/6/Rev.1, Programme 3) make scant reference to the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, in early 2018 UNODA claimed to have put in place an SDG Taskforce and a Frontier Issues Taskforce, but no mention of, or evidence for, the existence of these groups was forthcoming throughout the course of the evaluation.
[53] See para. 8.b and A/RES/S-10/2, para. 123.

administrative support to groups of governmental experts, as UNODA currently does, and would imply a well-defined position in stimulating and shaping the disarmament arena.

V. Conclusion

58. Disarmament is a key pillar of the Organisation, enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Since the last OIOS evaluation of UNODA, the disarmament arena has been marked by a heightened degree of complexity and volatility. Before this backdrop, UNODA delivered a relevant programme of work during the period evaluated, and one that showed some indications of effectiveness, despite a comparatively small budget and unstable resources.

59. The period evaluated also witnessed a range of developments – from the adoption of the SDGs to peace and security reform to an array of frontier issues – that collectively shaped the future direction of disarmament. However, UNODA had no strategic planning process in place to ensure that its programme of work is not merely *consistent with its mandate*, but rather is *maximally relevant* in light of these developments, its comparative advantage, and its resources. It also lacked a robust monitoring and evaluation function to help ensure that, moving forward, UNODA is not merely *potentially* effective, but rather also able to strive towards being *maximally* effective in achieving its targeted objectives – and that it is incorporating learning into future planning, resource mobilization, and other forms of decision-making.

VI. Recommendations

60. OIOS-IED made five important recommendations, all of which UNODA accepted.

Recommendation 1 *(Results A-C, E)*

UNODA should undertake an integrated strategic planning process, leading to a strategic plan, which identifies, at minimum:

   a. the overarching UNODA vision and broad organisational objectives, framed around its mandate, the SDGs, the New Disarmament Agenda and other relevant foundational guidance (including on gender, and relevant frontier issues), with due consideration of its Strategic Framework;
   b. the role each organisational unit and office will play in helping achieve each prioritised objective; and
   c. how organisational units and offices will work together toward shared objectives, both horizontally (across headquarters units) and vertically (between headquarters and decentralised offices).

Indicators: Strategic plan adopted and implemented

Recommendation 2 *(Results A-C, E)*

Based on the strategic plan, UNODA should undertake the following actions, in order to ensure the plan's successful implementation:

a. a systematic mapping of internal assets and gaps and, leading to the creation or reconfiguration of key functions, structural arrangements and/or overarching policies and strategies pursuant to the plan;

b. articulation of workplans for each organisational unit and office, rooted in a systematic contextual analysis, which identify the most relevant programmatic activities that will be pursued, in which specific (sub)regions and issue areas, and the supports, partnerships, and resources that will be required for successful implementation.

Indicators: Assets/gaps map produced, functions created or reconfigured, workplans produced, all in explicit alignment with the strategic plan

Recommendation 3 *(Results A-E)*

UNODA should develop and implement a strategy that defines its comparative advantage and role in helping achieve SDG 16.4, as well as other relevant targets beyond SDG 16.4, systematically maps its potential contribution to other relevant SDGs, and identifies how it will partner with UNODC and others to ensure it adequately exercises its co-stewardship role over SDG 16.4 and brings its expertise to bear on any other SDGs.

Indicators: SDG strategy developed and implemented

Recommendation 4 *(Results C-E)*

UNODA should strengthen its monitoring and self-evaluation function through the establishment of a dedicated function, as well as the development of: (a) an evaluation policy; (b) an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework and risk-based evaluation plan, rooted in the strategic plan; and (c) revised M&E methodologies, toolkit, templates, and tools for off-the-shelf stakeholder feedback and assessment surveys.

Indicators: Function established, documents developed and implemented

Recommendation 5 *(Results C-D)*

UNODA should put forward proposals to the States and High Contracting Parties to improve the sustainability of the BWC and CCW ISUs*.*

Indicators: Proposals developed and implemented

Annex I – UNODA Management Response

In this Annex, OIOS presents the full text of comments received from UNODA on the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the evaluation of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. This practice has been instituted in line with General Assembly resolution 64/263, following the recommendation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee.

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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: **A:**	Mr. (Eddie) Yee Woo Guo Director Inspection and Evaluation Division Office of Internal Oversight Services	**DATE:**	29 March 2018
		REFERENCE:	
FROM: **De**	Izumi Nakamitsu High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Office for Disarmament Affairs		

SUBJECT: **Response to the draft report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the Evaluation of the Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA)**

1. Thank you for your memorandum dated 21 March 2018 and the draft report on your Office's evaluation of the Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA).

2. The Office for Disarmament Affairs has reviewed the draft report, as well as the OIOS Inspection and Evaluation Division's reply to our extensive informal comments to the draft report that were provided earlier in March. ODA certainly appreciates the efforts by the OIOS evaluation team to meet and interview many of our senior managers and staff members of the five Branches, three Regional Centres and our Office in Vienna. On its part, ODA believes that it has extended its full cooperation to OIOS throughout the evaluation period.

3. The Office for Disarmament Affairs takes careful note and appreciates the observations, conclusions and recommendations made by OIOS. ODA, however, cannot fully subscribe to some of the observations and conclusions included in the draft report. ODA believes that a number of those observations and recommendations were inaccurately reflected or misinterpreted and require reframing. At the early stage of the evaluation, ODA had also requested OIOS advice on how to enhance the monitoring and self-evaluation capacity of the Office given its small size, growing demands and lack of adequate human and financial resources. We are disappointed that this has not been included amongst the recommendations.

4. It should also be noted that some of the relevant recommendations provided in the draft report are already in progress or will likely be implemented by the time of the 59th session of the Committee on Programme Coordination (CPC) in June 2019 or by the Triennial review of ODA's implementation of the recommendations in 2021.

5. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Mr. Robert McCouch and his colleagues, Mr. Juan Carlos Pena and Mr. Thiago Sousa Neto, for their hard work during the past several months in evaluating the mandate and activities of ODA.

6. We look forward to receiving a copy of the final report.
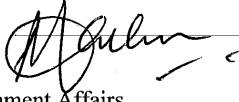

cc: Thomas Markram

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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: **A:**	Mr. (Eddie) Yee Woo Guo Director Inspection and Evaluation Division Office of Internal Oversight Services	**DATE:** 6 April 2018 **REFERENCE:** _____
FROM: **De**	Thomas Markram Officer-in Charge Office for Disarmament Affairs	
SUBJECT:	<u>**Response to the draft report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the Evaluation of the Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA)**</u>	

1.   Further to the Office for Disarmament Affairs' memorandum dated 29 March 2018 in response to the draft report on OIOS' evaluation of ODA, please find attached ODA's Recommendations Action Plan.

2.   As mentioned in our previous memorandum, the Office for Disarmament Affairs does not fully agree with some of the observations and conclusions included in the draft report. Nonetheless, ODA has decided to accept all the five recommendations made in the draft evaluation report with the understanding that some minor adjustments will be reflected in some of the recommendations.

3.   In addition, ODA would like to reiterate that while it strongly agrees with the recommendation to strengthen the Office's monitoring and self-evaluation capacity, this would seriously require additional human and funding requirements given ODA's small size and lack of sufficient resources.

4.   Your keen attention to the above comments would be much appreciated.

cc: Izumi Nakamitsu

Annex II – UNODA Recommendation Action Plan

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the Evaluation of the
United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs

OIOS-IED Recommendation	Anticipated Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Target date for completion
Recommendation 1 (Results A-C, E) UNODA should undertake an integrated strategic planning process, leading to a strategic plan which identifies, at minimum: a. the overarching UNODA vision and broad organisational objectives, framed around its mandate, the SDGs, the New Disarmament Agenda and other relevant foundational guidance (including on gender, and relevant frontier issues), with due consideration of its Strategic Framework; b. the role each organisational unit and office will play in helping achieve each prioritised objective; and c. how organisational units and offices will work together toward shared objectives, both horizontally (across headquarters units) and vertically (between headquarters and decentralised offices). *Indicators:* Strategic plan adopted and implemented	**UNODA accepts this recommendation** UNODA is currently assisting the Secretary-General to develop a comprehensive agenda for disarmament, as well as a strategic roadmap for the future. The Secretary-General plans to deliver a major address on his Disarmament Agenda in the first half of 2018. This agenda will provide more coherent support from the Organization to the efforts of Member States in their disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation efforts and identify priority issues and objectives to be pursued within the framework of the United Nations over the next four to five years. Each ODA Branch and its regional centers will realign and reframe their priorities accordingly to the vision and objectives outlined in the Secretary-General's new agenda for disarmament, which includes implementation of existing mandates, the relevant SDG goals and targets, gender and relevant frontier issues.	UNODA senior management, WMDB, Geneva Branch, CAB, IOB and RDB and regional centers and the Vienna office	June 2019

OIOS-IED Recommendation	Anticipated Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Target date for completion
Recommendation 2 (Results A-C, E) Based on the strategic plan, UNODA should undertake the following actions, in order to ensure the plan's successful implementation: a. a systematic mapping of internal assets and gaps and, leading to the creation or reconfiguration of key functions, structural arrangements and/or overarching policies and strategies pursuant to the plan; b. articulation of workplans for each organisational unit and office, rooted in a systematic contextual analysis, which identify the most relevant programmatic activities that will be pursued, in which specific (sub)regions and issue areas, and the supports, partnerships, and resources that will be required for successful implementation. *Indicators:* Assets/gaps map produced, functions created or reconfigured, workplans produced, all in explicit alignment with the strategic plan	**UNODA accepts this recommendation** UNODA will implement an in-depth review and relevant reconfiguration of its key functions and policies to better align with the updated strategic plan, as well as existing mandates. All of UNODA's subprogrammes will ensure that the key priorities identified by the updated strategic plan will be reflected and clearly articulated in their respective workplans and successfully implemented.	UNODA senior management, WMDB, Geneva Branch, CAB, IOB and RDB and regional centers and the Vienna office	June 2019

OIOS-IED Recommendation	Anticipated Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Target date for completion
Recommendation 3 (Results A-E) UNODA should develop and implement a strategy that defines its comparative advantage and role in helping achieve SDG 16.4, as well as other relevant targets beyond SDG 16.4, systematically maps its potential contribution to other relevant SDGs, and identifies how it will partner with UNODC and others to ensure it adequately exercises its co-stewardship role over SDG 16.4 and brings its expertise to bear on any other SDGs. *Indicators:* SDG strategy developed and implemented	**UNODA accepts this recommendation** UNODA has already developed an SDG strategy that comprises relevant SDG Targets beyond Target 16.4, under the following SDG Goals where disarmament and arms control can make a positive contribution: Goal 3 (Good health and well-being); Goal 4 (Quality education); Goal 5 (Gender Equality); Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth); Goal10 (Reducing inequality); Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities; Goal 14 (Life under water); Goal 15 (Life on Land); Goal 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions); and Goal 17 (Global partnership). The Action Plan is now under finalization. It lays out the various actions to be undertaken under each Target by each Branch and the Regional Centres. On Target 16.4, in particular, where UNODA and UNODC will serve as co-custodian agencies a division of labour is being discussed to ensure that each agency's proficiency is optimally put to use. The establishment of an inter-office working group is envisaged to this effect.	CAB is the coordinating Branch. Each UNODA Branch will contribute in accordance with its areas of work that relate to the SDGs targets.	December 2018

OIOS-IED Recommendation	Anticipated Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Target date for completion
Recommendation 4 (Results C-E) UNODA should strengthen its monitoring and self-evaluation function through the establishment of a dedicated function, as well as the development of: (a) an evaluation policy; (b) an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework and risk-based evaluation plan, rooted in the strategic plan; and (c) revised M&E methodologies, toolkit, templates, and tools for off-the-shelf stakeholder feedback and assessment surveys. *Indicators:* Function established, documents developed and implemented	**UNODA accepts this recommendation** UNODA agrees on the importance of monitoring and self-evaluation functions. UNODA accepts and supports this recommendation, as well as the strengthening of its M&E function. However, as mentioned on numerous occasions, smaller offices such as UNODA do not have adequate human and financial resources to establish full time monitoring or self-evaluation functions or teams. Nonetheless, UNODA will develop a more coherent self-evaluation policy, as well as better tools for stakeholder feedback and assessment surveys.	UNODA senior management, WMDB, Geneva Branch, CAB, IOB and RDB and regional centers and the Vienna office	April 2021
Recommendation 5 (Results C-D) UNODA should put forward proposals to the States and High Contracting Parties to improve the sustainability of the BWC and CCW ISUs. *Indicators:* Proposals developed and implemented	**UNODA accepts this recommendation** UNODA will continue working closely with the respective Chairpersons of the BWC ISU and the CCW ISU, as well as the States Parties, to try to enhance the sustainability of these Implementation Support Units.	UNODA senior management, the Geneva Branch and the BWC and CCW ISUs.	June 2019