OIOS

Office of Internal Oversight Services

INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2023/003

Audit of the operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Chad

While the country office adequately supported the Humanitarian Coordinator, it needed to further improve support to some coordination structures and human resources management

8 February 2023
Assignment No. AN2022-590-01

Audit of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Chad

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Chad. The objective of the audit was to determine whether the OCHA country office in Chad had delivered its mandate in an efficient and effective manner in line with OCHA's strategic objectives. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2022. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered the following risk areas: (a) coordination with partners involved in the humanitarian response in Chad; (b) humanitarian response planning and monitoring; (c) information management; (d) management of staff and other resources; and (e) cross-cutting issues including gender, disability, multilingualism, support to sustainable development goals, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

Humanitarian response coordination in Chad was adequate as the Office supported the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in the areas of advocacy, protection, and accountability. However, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were not being supported to scale up their internal capacities and play an active role in the HCT. There was a high vacancy rate owing to the absence of a strategy to deal with the specific operational circumstances in Chad. Consequently, the Office did not have adequate capacity to carry out certain tasks such as supporting the Cash Working Group as co-chair. In addition, assessment of the need on whether to establish a country based pooled fund or access the regional humanitarian fund for West and Central Africa remained in progress. Some of the recommendations of the Department of Safety and Security (DSS) on the security of the Office were not yet implemented, risking the safety of staff. Furthermore, compliance with mandatory training and staff performance evaluation was low. There were also no strategies to improve multilingualism in the Office.

OIOS made six recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, OCHA Chad needed to:

- Redouble its efforts to include a forum of national NGOs in the HCT, including providing any necessary support for their capacity development;

- Explore mechanisms for accessing the regional humanitarian fund for West and Central Africa to implement humanitarian activities;

- Assign responsibility and set target dates to ensure all DSS recommendations have been properly and sustainably implemented;

- Identify and address impediments to full compliance with mandatory training requirements;

- Ensure all staff members complete the annual staff evaluation process within the deadline set by the administrative instruction on the performance management and development system; and

- Appoint a focal point to implement multilingualism policies and set multilingualism targets within the Office.

OCHA accepted the recommendations and has initiated action to implement them. Actions required to close the recommendations are indicated in Annex I.
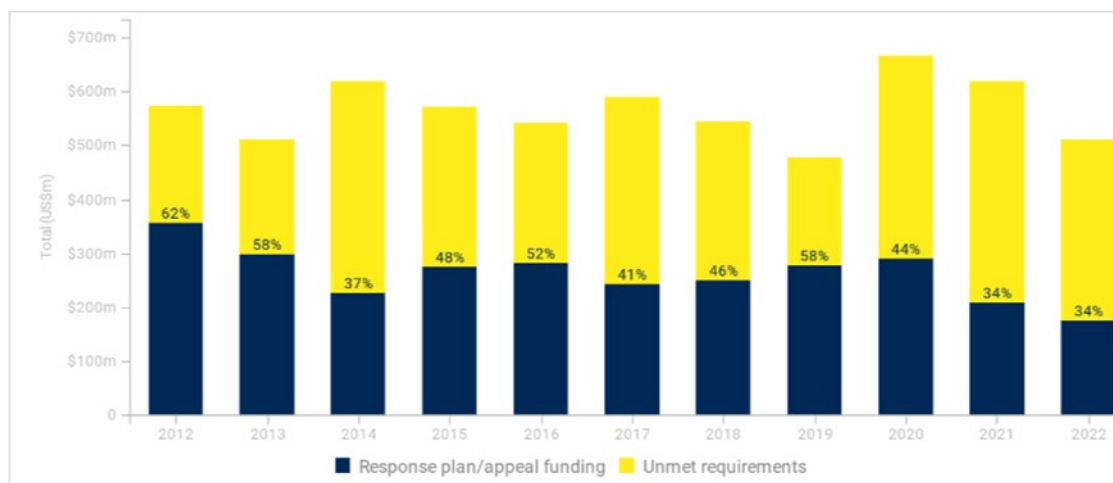
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Audit of the operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Chad

I. BACKGROUND

1.   The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Chad.

2.   By its resolution 46/182 dated 19 December 1991, the General Assembly created OCHA as a part of the United Nations Secretariat to further strengthen the collective humanitarian efforts of the United Nations system for responding to complex emergencies and natural disasters. OCHA's country and regional offices are responsible for delivering five core functions in the field: (a) coordination, (b) humanitarian financing, (c) policy, (d) advocacy; and (e) information management.

3.   The OCHA country office in Chad was established in September 2004 by the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, to support the Chad Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) in providing a coordinated humanitarian response to the situation in Chad, following an influx of refugees from the Darfur area of Sudan between 2003 and 2004. Subsequently, there have been other crises in the region, including the 2012 influx of Central African Republic refugees and Chadian returnees to the eastern part of the country, 2015 crisis with the advent of armed groups of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin, and other cases of food insecurity, malnutrition, health emergencies and population movements. 2021 also saw new arrivals of displaced persons from Sudan to the east of Chad, following armed militia attacks in West Darfur. Currently, Chad faces persistent humanitarian challenges linked to the declining security situation along the country's borders, violence perpetrated by armed groups in the Lake Chad basin region, insecurity in certain parts of the country and in neighbouring countries, as well as socio-economic challenges, health and effects of climate change.

4.   OCHA's overarching goal is to have a tangible impact on improving and protecting the lives of the most vulnerable people in Chad, through the implementation of its core functions. This includes advocacy to mobilize more resources for the immediate humanitarian response and for the national Government and development actors to 'step up' to address the lack of basic infrastructure and chronic vulnerabilities that drive much of the humanitarian need.

5.   The first humanitarian response appeal for the country was in 2004 with annual consolidated appeals thereafter, which were funded to between 34 and 62 per cent of the requirements. The Chad Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) has grown from $165.5 million in 2004 to $510.9 million in 2022, an indication of the increased humanitarian needs of the country, although the response to the needs remained challenged by limited resources. The trend in the response to consolidated appeals from 2012 to 2022 is reflected in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Trend in humanitarian consolidated appeal response for Chad 2012 – 2022*

*September 2022
Source: https://fts.unocha.org/

6.   OCHA Chad is headed by an Officer at the D-1 level who is responsible for managing the Office with an authorized staffing table of 50 posts (13 international and 37 national), as of June 2022. The 2022 budget for the country office totaled $5.8 million ($5.3 million in 2021). The country office has its headquarters in N'djamena, and maintains three sub-offices in Gore, Baga Sola, and Abeche.

7.   Comments provided by OCHA are incorporated in italics.

II.   AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

8.   The objective of the audit was to determine whether the OCHA country office in Chad delivered its mandate in an efficient and effective manner in line with OCHA's strategic objectives.

9.   This audit was included in the 2022 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the risks associated with coordination and delivery of humanitarian response in Chad.

10.   OIOS conducted this audit from July to September 2022. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2022. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered the following risk areas: (a) coordination with partners involved in the humanitarian response in Chad; (b) humanitarian response planning and monitoring; (c) information management; (d) management of staff and other resources; and (e) cross-cutting issues including gender, disability, multilingualism, support to sustainable development goals, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

11.   The audit methodology included: (a) interviews with key personnel; (b) review of relevant documentation; (c) analytical review of data; (d) sample testing of selected transactions.

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

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Coordination of humanitarian response in Chad

The humanitarian response coordination mechanism in Chad was satisfactory

13.   OCHA Chad supported the work of humanitarian actors in the implementation of the HRP. These included United Nations agencies, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, donors, as well as state structures.

14.   The humanitarian coordination structure consisted of a Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) headed by the HC for which OCHA Chad was the secretariat. At the national level, nine clusters operated together with the Rapid Response Mechanism, Cash Working Group (CWG) and Information Management Working Group; and they all reported to the Inter Cluster Coordination (ICC) led by OCHA. Sub-clusters were present at the field level, as determined based on need, available resources and field presence of the coordinators. In addition to the ICC, OCHA also led three coordination forums, namely: General Coordination Forum, International NGOs' forum and Civil-Military Coordination Forum.

15.   OCHA Chad's coordination role included the active support of the HC and HCT in the areas of advocacy, protection and accountability. The main advocacy goal was to increase the visibility of humanitarian crises facing Chad by raising awareness among target groups (internal and external) on the assistance needed by the affected populations and the challenges related to protection. The country office assisted in developing the advocacy strategy, including resource mobilization.

16.   Regarding protection, the country office assisted the HCT in developing its protection strategy document, which established a common understanding of the vision, priority strategic objectives and the means to achieve those objectives. The annual plans of the Office included several activities to ensure protection of and assistance to displaced persons, provision of advice on various international legal instruments, and analysis and policy support relevant to the protection of civilians. The country office also maintained contacts with government bodies responsible for overseeing humanitarian affairs in the country to aid humanitarian access and protect displaced persons and humanitarian staff.

17.   In terms of accountability, OCHA Chad supported the HCT and HC through regular updates on after-action reviews and facilitation of cluster presentations to share information on progress, challenges and the way forward to address emerging sectorial humanitarian needs. The country office also engaged with cluster leads to ensure the functioning and performance monitoring of clusters.

18.   The Cluster Coordination Mechanism formed the basis for collecting information and assembling projects and inputs in developing the national HRP. OIOS review indicated that the HRP process was improving with increasing involvement of various stakeholders including the government. Cluster briefings were regularly included as an agenda item at HCT meetings, with action points specified and responsible persons designated. Cluster assessments were carried out for 2020 and 2021 through performance monitoring reviews conducted by the ICC group, and areas for improvement were highlighted for the HCT.

19.   The sub-national ICC mechanisms were activated. Regular coordination meetings were held at the field level in Abeche, Bagasola and Gore with the agendas and minutes of meetings documented together with action points and follow-ups. Cross-cutting issues such as gender, disability and protection were regularly mainstreamed across all clusters. OIOS concluded that humanitarian response coordination in the country was satisfactory.

<u>Need to develop action plans for capacity building of national NGOs</u>

20.   According to its terms of reference, the HCT should comprise organizations that carry out humanitarian actions in the country and agree to participate in their coordination. These include representatives of United Nations agencies, OCHA and international and national NGOs. OCHA Chad is guided by the principles stated in the OCHA strategic plan for 2018 – 2021: that diversity of humanitarian actors is a key asset, and all stakeholders should have a role in saving and protecting lives and alleviating human suffering; and that OCHA should promote coordination mechanisms and processes that are open for participation by all relevant local and global humanitarian actors.

21.   The HCT in Chad did not include any national NGOs because there was no forum of national NGOs with which the HCT could interact. (There was a forum of international NGOs, which enabled regular meetings with OCHA.) One of the conditions for inclusion in the HCT is the presence of a single platform representing national NGOs to ensure their coordinated participation and independence from any political and other undue influences.

22.   OCHA Chad had compiled a database of both national and international humanitarian partners and was encouraging national NGOs to create a unified forum. However, it had not developed an action plan for capacity development of local NGOs for inclusion in the humanitarian development process.

23.   Greater support of national NGOs' capacity and representation was required for them to fully participate in the Chad HCT mechanism.   Their absence from the HCT was also contrary to the humanitarian principles of partnership, which include equality, transparency, accountability and complementarity.

> **(1) OCHA Chad should redouble its efforts to include a forum of national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Humanitarian Country Team, including any necessary support for national NGOs' capacity development.**
>
> *OCHA Chad accepted recommendation 1 and stated that it would continue to support the formalization of a national NGO forum in the spirit of localization. The Office would support the election of representatives starting in the first quarter of 2023, which would eventually lead to national NGO representation in the HCT.*

<u>Action was being taken to support the cash working group</u>

24.   The objective of CWG, one of the HCT coordination mechanisms, is to provide technical support to partners to facilitate cash transfer activities. Cash transfers are provided to affected populations in serious humanitarian and emergency situations, such as refugee families or families living in extreme poverty due to a natural disaster or food crisis. OCHA data showed that during 2020, there were eight partners involved in cash transfers and about 800,000 persons had benefitted from $29 million cash transfers.

25.   According to its annual workplan, OCHA Chad's role in the CWG included strengthening coordination to promote increased use of cash as an assistance modality, supporting the reinforcement of cash coordination and setting up the minimum expenditure basket (MEB), which represents the minimum amount a household requires to meet the cost of their basic needs on a regular or seasonal basis. The importance of coordination in CWG was to avoid duplications and share information on who was doing what and where among humanitarian actors.

26.   CWG met sporadically in 2020 and 2021 with six meetings recorded, although its terms of reference prescribed monthly meetings. OIOS noted that during this period of quasi-inactivity, there was

not much progress in the harmonization of cash transfers and some CWG activities included in the OCHA Chad's annual workplans were not completed, namely, updates to the MEB and identification of financial service providers in the country, which according to the 2021 workplan should have been completed in the first quarter of 2021. This could lead to inadequate assistance to beneficiaries.

27. The fewer CWG meetings was attributed to the inability of OCHA Chad, as the co-chair of the group at the time, to fully step into the role due to inadequate staffing resources. According to the division of tasks, the OCHA Chad deputy head of office was co-chair for the CWG, and this position was vacant.

28. The CWG was revitalized in June 2022, with new terms of reference. Its structure was changed to comprise two co-backup chairs, with a humanitarian agency selected as a second co-backup chair responsible for programmatic aspects with effect from July 2022. OCHA stated that in the short-term the humanitarian agency, with the agreement of OCHA, was hiring a semi-dedicated staff member to ensure additional capacities for the technical coordination of the CWG. In the medium and long-term, a full-time dedicated staff would be available to coordinate humanitarian cash transfers and the work of the CWG. Therefore, OIOS did not make a recommendation on this issue.

B. Humanitarian financing

Central Emergency Relief Fund projects were duly prioritized and reported

29. The Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) was established by the General Assembly in 2005 to ensure a more predictable and timely response to humanitarian emergencies. With the response to the Chad HRP being amongst the four lowest funded HRPs globally in the past 10 years, there was a need to regularly draw on CERF for underfunded emergencies in Chad. CERF also provided rapid response funds to help United Nations agencies and their partners respond quickly to sudden onset of humanitarian crisis needs at the initial stages of a crisis.

30. A summary of rapid response and emergency CERF allocations to Chad for the period of 2019 – 2022 is as shown in the table below.

Table 1: CERF allocations to Chad between 2019 – 2022

Year	Rapid response	Underfunded emergencies	Total
2019	-	10,979,313	10,979,313
2020	4,505,172	12,020,162	16,525,334
2021	-	7,001,065	7,001,065
2022	23,000,459	9,999,375	32,999,834
Total	27,505,631	39,999,915	67,505,546

Source: https://cerf.data.unocha.org

31. CERF guidelines require HCs to ensure grant requests are made based on the priorities highlighted for humanitarian responses. Following approval, United Nations agencies are required to update the clusters and the HC on the implementation status of CERF funded humanitarian projects to provide assurance that CERF activities were being implemented as intended and enable timely corrective action where required.

32. The clusters held project selection meetings and proposed projects were ranked for selection based on pre-determined and stated criteria, taking into consideration various factors including underfunded

sectors and protection matters. Cluster leads ensured alignment and coherence of proposed projects with HRP requirements.

33.   Responsibility for monitoring CERF funded projects lay with the various recipient United Nations agencies. OCHA Chad prepared annual interim and final reports on the projects based on information provided by the implementing agencies and ratified by the cluster leads. Status reports were provided for all 2021 projects, highlighting completed activities, challenges, persons assisted, and further challenges anticipated to close the projects. OIOS concluded that CERF allocations were appropriately prioritized, monitored and reported upon to the HC.

<u>Resource mobilization strategy</u>

34.   As part of its support to the HC, OCHA Chad formulated and documented a resource mobilization strategy, which was derived as an extension of the overall advocacy strategy of the HCT. The resource mobilization strategy recognized the difficulty in mobilizing resources for Chad and need for advocacy to increase the visibility of the humanitarian crises facing the country to raise awareness among targeted groups. The resource mobilization strategy aimed to better present funding needs and to draw the attention of donors to the risks associated with underfunding. OCHA Chad provided support to various planned activities in the strategy including the official launch of the HRP, quarterly information meetings on the humanitarian situation and level of funding in relation to agreed needs, bilateral meetings with representatives of traditional and non-traditional donors in Chad, strategic visits to select countries, and organizing quarterly field visits jointly with the government, HCT members and donors. These initiatives were praised by the donor community, government representatives and various partners.

35.   As part of the resource mobilization strategy for Chad, the Office coordinated the visit of members of the HCT to Europe to make humanitarian issues in Chad more visible, attract the attention of the international community and mobilize more resources for the humanitarian response. Member States briefing on the humanitarian situation in Chad was held in Geneva in May 2022. This was a creative way of advocacy for the needs of the country which was organized by OCHA Chad. In addition, OCHA Chad supported the HC in developing the annual HRP and held online training sessions for cluster leads, focal points and information officers to help attendees understand the HRP process and assist their partners in submitting valid requests for funding.

36.   OIOS concluded that OCHA Chad was adequately supporting the HC in their resource mobilization role.

<u>Need for OCHA Chad to explore the possibility of accessing the regional humanitarian fund for West and Central Africa</u>

37.   There was no established country-based pooled fund (CBPF) for Chad, and donors had not been sensitized on considering the need to establish such a fund. CBPF would provide more predictable flexible funding for humanitarian coordination activities in the country. The lack of predictable, flexible and multi-year funding hampers the ability to coordinate, launch and sustain essential programmes and projects. OIOS noted that OCHA Chad's workplan for 2021 included an activity to conduct specific advocacy to engage donors in setting up a pooled fund. There was no timeframe stated and no evidence any work was done on this. The 2022 workplan was more specific and stated that the country office would assess the feasibility of establishing a pooled fund by the second quarter of 2022.

38.   OCHA Chad management explained that plans to explore the establishment of a CBPF had been put on hold due to the existence of the regional humanitarian fund for West and Central Africa, launched in June 2021 as a pilot funding model to boost humanitarian operations for countries in the Sahel sub-

region. However, since the establishment of the regional pool fund, its funds had not been used for the benefit of Chad. The activation of the funds for any country was based on advocacy by each country. At the time of the audit, OCHA Chad was yet to work out mechanisms for accessing the regional funds and there were no actions in the annual workplans in this regard. On further enquiry, a representative of the Country Based Pooled Funds Section at Headquarters indicated that they were ready to discuss with OCHA Chad mechanisms to access the regional humanitarian fund for West and Central Africa, as only two countries were doing so currently.

> **(2) OCHA Chad should take steps to explore mechanisms for accessing the regional humanitarian fund for West and Central Africa to implement humanitarian activities.**
>
> *OCHA Chad accepted recommendation 2 and stated that OCHA had commissioned an exercise to collect lessons learned from the pilot funding model at the end of 2022 to inform the Emergency Relief Coordinator's decision on whether to activate a regional humanitarian fund in West and Central Africa envelope for Chad.*

C.   Country office operations

Workplans and cost plans were adequately developed, with risks identified and monitored

39.   OCHA Chad clearly articulated its annual workplans for 2021 and 2022, which were derived from a 5-year strategic plan and included priorities, planned outputs and activities, as well as risks and sufficiently detailed risk mitigating measures.

40.   The 2020 and 2021 annual cost plans were in place. Budget implementation rates were monitored, with justifications provided and approved before revisions were made as appropriate. The cost plans derived from the annual workplans amounted to $5.3 million each for 2020 and 2021, and $5.8 million for 2022. Staff cost represented 78 per cent of the annual expenditure, with operating costs being the next highest category of expenditure at 10 per cent and representing costs for maintenance, medical services and training. The recruitment of local staff was done by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Payments to UNDP were made through financial authorizations, low value acquisitions through Umoja and small purchases through petty cash. Six contracts were in place with local providers for printing, catering, security and cleaning services, e-News and publicity. OIOS reviewed the budget implementation and asset management controls and concluded that they were adequate.

Need to develop a targeted strategy for recruitment of staff

41.   As of July 2022, OCHA Chad had 9 vacant posts out of 50 established posts. The deputy head of office post, a critical position for the Office, had been vacant for over six months at the time of the audit. Three key P-3 positions were also vacant, including one in the Advocacy and Public Information Unit that was critical for advocacy, strategic communications and bringing visibility to the Chad crises.

42.   These vacancies led to inadequate resources for the Office to execute its mandate more effectively and limited OCHA Chad's operational capacity and effectiveness. Combined with the difficult operational environment, the vacancies placed a high burden on staff and could affect their well-being.

43.   OIOS was informed that recruitment for field offices was handled centrally from New York, with advertisements going out together under the heading "recruitments for multiple duty stations". OIOS was told that this made recruiting for OCHA Chad difficult as it was not a preferred duty station. In two instances, candidates declined offers at the last minute and opted for positions in other duty stations. In

addition, an outreach strategy to address the special circumstances faced by Chad was not in place. OCHA stated that the implementation of the OCHA People Strategy 2022-2026 and ongoing efforts to address concerns expressed regarding delays in recruitment timelines in specific countries and duty stations, including for national staff, will address the issue. In addition, the OCHA Human Resources Section was already availing the Office of Human Resources' Outreach services, which it planned to continue leveraging. Based on the explanation provided by OCHA, OIOS did not make a recommendation on this issue at this time.

Need to follow up on implementation of recommendations on office premises security

44. Security for OCHA Chad had been evaluated as required by the Department of Safety and Security (DSS), but there were still some recommendations that needed to be implemented for the premises to be fully security compliant. For example, while the Baga Sola Office accommodation was rated as meeting the minimum required standard, the following three recommendations were pending: (a) installation of a video surveillance system; (b) preparation of a fire safety plan; and (c) installation of a surveillance camera for the information and communications technology room.

45. The N'djamena Office was assessed in June 2021 and the review recommended the installation of cameras, which should be constantly checked for state of repair to ensure permanent surveillance. However, OIOS was informed that while they had been installed, some were no longer functional. For the Gore Office, the DSS assessment done in January 2022 did not recommend the renewal of the lease agreement since the compound did not meet the minimum-security standards.

46. The implementation of DSS recommendations is critical to mitigating the security risk of the offices and in line with the duty of care to secure the safety of staff.

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(3) OCHA Chad should assign responsibility and set target dates to ensure all DSS recommendations have been properly and sustainably implemented.

OCHA Chad accepted recommendation 3 and stated that, building on the significant progress made in 2022, it would implement the remaining DSS recommendations by 31 December 2023.

Need to ensure completion of all mandatory training courses

47. All mandatory training courses are required to be completed by staff within six months of joining the Organization, as per the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2018/4 on the United Nations learning programme.

48. The completion rate for mandatory training as of 27th July 2022 was 73 per cent. In some instances, staff complained that they could not complete the courses due to poor network stability. Failure to complete mandatory training could affect the ability of staff to fulfil their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently and to uphold the values of the United Nations.

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(4) OCHA Chad should identify and address impediments to full compliance with mandatory training requirements.

OCHA Chad accepted recommendation 4 and stated that, excluding new staff with a 6-month grace period, 80 per cent of staff had now completed their mandatory training. The Office will encourage unit management to assign 2½ hours, twice weekly, to ensure the remaining staff members complete their training by 31 January 2023. The situation would be monitored on a case-by-case basis thereafter, to see what additional measures can be taken.

<u>Need to complete staff performance evaluation</u>

49.   United Nations Staff Rule 1.3 on performance of staff requires that staff members be evaluated for their efficiency, competence and integrity through performance appraisal mechanisms that assess their compliance with the standards set out in the Staff Regulations and Rules for purposes of accountability.

50.   National staff e-Performance was completed except for one staff member who was yet to complete their evaluation. For international staff members, e-Performance was only 40 per cent complete as of July 2022. For the remainder, four were pending second reporting officer review, one was pending first reporting officer review and one was still in work planning stage.

> **(5) OCHA Chad office should take action to ensure that all staff members complete the annual staff evaluation process within the deadline set by the administrative instruction on the performance management and development system.**
>
> *OCHA Chad accepted recommendation 5 and stated that the high staff turnover rate in the country had prevented many staff members from completing their evaluations on time, for want of a first or second reporting officer. Nonetheless, performance evaluation had been completed for all national staff. Given that several international recruitments had either recently been completed or would be completed in the coming months, this indicator should improve significantly.*

D.   Cross-cutting issues

<u>Actions were being taken to improve gender parity</u>

51.   At the time of the audit, only 2 of the 13 international posts were occupied by females. Overall, there was an 89 per cent male to female ratio for the Office, which was indicative of a gender imbalance. While OCHA Chad's workplans and activities included gender mainstreaming and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse considerations at national and sub-national levels, there was a need for additional strategies to bridge the gender parity gap.

52.   Management efforts to recruit female candidates were noted. For example, offers of employment were made to four female candidates during the audit period, with two female staff onboarded while two others rejected their offers.

53.   The Office cited working conditions and cultural issues in Chad as the main reasons for the gender imbalance. Staff members in field locations also expressed that the presence of sports and recreational facilities would help improve living conditions. There was a need for the Office to develop a local strategy to address some of the challenges within its control to achieve improvements towards parity goals. OCHA Chad explained that while OCHA had a system-wide gender parity strategy, it would develop a country-specific action plan regarding actions the country office could take considering local realities and needs. The Office was already taking measures to overcome some cultural and social barriers, including an internship scheme that currently has four national female interns who had acquired sufficient experience and expertise to make them more competitive during upcoming recruitments. Based on actions taken by OCHA Chad, no recommendation is made on this issue.

There was a need to encourage greater multilingualism in the Chad Office

54.   The General Assembly recognizes multilingualism as a core value of the Organization, entailing the active involvement and commitment of all stakeholders, including all United Nations duty stations and offices away from Headquarters. In its resolution 61/266, the General Assembly stressed the importance of providing United Nations information, technical assistance and training materials, whenever possible, in the local languages of the beneficiary countries.

55.   The OCHA 2022 Under-Secretary-General's compact stated a target of 100 per cent of its workplans and those of its subdivisions integrating multilingualism and/or language considerations. OCHA Chad was proactively and effectively communicating with local partners in French, and communications with the head office were in a mix of French and English though not all the country staff were fluent in both languages. However, there was minimal use of Arabic in communications and signage, although it was one of the official languages in Chad. A review of the annual workplans indicated that multilingualism considerations and the promotion of multilingualism had not been taken into account. These are essential to ensure that target audiences receive communications in a language they can fully understand and express themselves in.

56.   The multilingualism target set by the Under-Secretary-General had not been implemented at the country level as there was no focal point at the local level to ensure the implementation of the target.

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(6) OCHA Chad should appoint a focal point to implement multilingualism policies and set multilingualism targets within the Office.

OCHA Chad accepted recommendation 6 and stated that it had designated a staff member as a multilingualism focal point to make proposals to implement multilingualism policies according to the existing global strategy, where possible, for the country and sub-offices. In addition, an action plan would be proposed following an assessment of staff needs, that would include the hiring of language teachers, "English days" and other activities.

IV.   ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

57.   OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of OCHA 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 the operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Chad

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical[1]/ Important[2]	C/ O[3]	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date[4]
1	OCHA Chad should redouble its efforts to include a forum of national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Humanitarian Country Team, including any necessary support for national NGOs' capacity development.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of national NGO representation in the HCT.	30 September 2023
2	OCHA Chad should take steps to explore mechanisms for accessing the regional humanitarian fund for West and Central Africa to implement humanitarian activities.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of action taken on the results of the lessons learned exercise on the pilot funding model for West and Central Africa.	31 December 2023
3	OCHA Chad should assign responsibility and set target dates to ensure all DSS recommendations have been properly and sustainably implemented.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that all DSS recommendations have been implemented and responsibilities assigned.	31 December 2023
4	OCHA Chad should identify and address impediments to full compliance with mandatory training requirements.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of full compliance with mandatory training requirements.	31 March 2023
5	OCHA Chad should take action to ensure that all staff members complete the annual staff evaluation process within the deadline set by the administrative instruction on the performance management and development system.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that all staff have undertaken the annual staff evaluations.	30 June 2023
6	OCHA Chad should appoint a focal point to implement multilingualism policies and set multilingualism targes within the Office.	Important	O	Receipt of the evidence of action taken to implement multilingualism policies in the Office.	31 December 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 OCHA in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response

United Nations · Nations Unies

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM   MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

TO:
A: Muriette Lawrence-Hume, Chief, New York Audit service, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

DATE: 26 January 2023

REFERENCE:

THROUGH:
S/C DE:

FROM:
DE: Mr. Martin Griffiths, *[signature: Martin Griffiths]*
Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

SUBJECT:
OBJET: **Draft report of an audit of the operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Chad (Assignment No. AN2022-590-01)**

In reference to your memorandum dated 10 January 2023, I am enclosing here with OCHA's management response to the draft report and the recommendations issued.

cc: Ms. Menada Wind-Andersen, Executive Officer, OCHA

Management Response

Audit of the operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Chad

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical[1]/ Important[2]	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	OCHA Chad should redouble its efforts to include a forum of national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Humanitarian Country Team, including any necessary support for national NGOs' capacity development.	Important	Yes	HoO	30 September 2023	OCHA Chad will continue supporting the formalization of an NGO forum in the spirit of localization. Following the progress made in 2022, OCHA Chad will support the election of representatives starting in Q1 which will eventually lead to National NGO representation in the HCT by 30 September 2023.
2	OCHA Chad should take steps to explore mechanisms for accessing the regional humanitarian fund for West and Central Africa to implement humanitarian activities.	Important	Yes	OAD Director + HRFMD	31 December 2023	An exercise to collect lessons learned from the pilot funding model in Niger and Burkina Faso was commissioned in Q4 2022. This will inform the ERC's decision on whether to activate an RHFWCA envelope for Chad by 31 December 2023. If approved, the activation process would begin in Q1 2024.
3	OCHA Chad should assign responsibility and set target dates to ensure all DSS recommendations have been properly and sustainably implemented.	Important	Yes	HoO, supported by the Head Administrative Unit and heads of sub-offices	31 December 2023	Building on significant progress made in 2022, OCHA Chad will carry out the following remaining DSS recommendations by 31 December 2023. Baga Sola sub-office: - Security cameras by 31 December 2023.

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[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.

Management Response

Audit of the operations of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Chad

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical[1]/ Important[2]	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						- Solar energy source by 31 December 2023 (according to the availability of funds) - Safe room by 31 December. Country office: - Security cameras will be installed by 31 December 2023. - Front gate will be modified to account for recommendations by 31 December 2023. Goré sub-office - DSS will conduct a security assessment in Q1. The recommendations of said assessment will be implemented by 31 December 2023.
4	OCHA Chad should identify and address impediments to full compliance with mandatory training requirements.	Important	Yes	HoO, supported by Head of Administrative Unit, head of units and heads of sub-offices	31 March 2023	The completion rate for mandatory trainings is 80% (excluding the 6-month grace period for new staff). The OCHA Chad country office has set 31 January 2023 as its goal to have all staff members (apart from new staff) complete their mandatory trainings. To achieve this, OCHA will encourage Unit management to assign 2 ½ hours, twice weekly, to staff members who still need to complete their trainings. After January 31 2023, if there are still people who have not completed their trainings, the situation will be monitored on a case-by-case basis to

Management Response

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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical[1]/ Important[2]	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						understand where the bottlenecks are and see what additional measures can be taken.
5	OCHA Chad should take action to ensure that all staff members complete the annual staff evaluation process within the deadline set by the administrative instruction on the performance management and development system.	Important	Yes	HoO Supported by head of units and head of sub-offices	30 June 2023	OCHA Chad notes that the high staff turnover rate in the country has prevented many staff members from completing their evaluations for fault of having a specific FRO and / or SRO. For national staff, the achievement rate is 100% and given that several international recruitments have either recently been completed or will be completed in the coming months, this indicator should improve significantly in Q1 and Q2.
6	OCHA Chad should appoint a focal point to implement multilingualism policies and set multilingualism targes within the office.	Important	Yes	HoO, supported by Reporting & Advocacy officer	31 December 2024	OCHA Chad has designated a staff member as a multilingualism focal point to make proposals for the implementation of multilingualism policies according to the existing global strategy where possible for the OCHA Chad country and sub-offices. An action plan will be proposed by Q2 following an assessment of staff needs. The hiring of language teachers, "English days" and other activities will be envisaged as appropriate. Once finalized, the action plan will be implemented between Q4 2023 and Q4 2024.