



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2019/138

**Audit of the child protection
programme in the United Nations
Organization Stabilization Mission in
the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**Despite the progress made, the Mission
needed to enhance monitoring and reporting
on child protection activities by its field
offices and military component**

**23 December 2019
Assignment No. AP2019/620/02**

Audit of the child protection programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the child protection programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls in ensuring effective management of the child protection programme in MONUSCO. The audit covered the period from July 2017 to June 2019 and included a review of planning activities and programme delivery.

MONUSCO had made good progress in its child protection programme delivery to support children being released from national security forces and non-state armed groups, effectively monitor and report on grave violations against children, and assist the Government to implement its action plan on child protection. However, there was still a need to enhance child protection activities by its field offices and military component.

OIOS made five recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, MONUSCO needed to:

- Periodically review the implementation of annual work plans to assess the effectiveness of the child protection programme.
- Ensure that contingent commanders appoint child protection focal points and regularly report on their child protection activities to the Force Child Protection Officer to adequately integrate the mandate into its military operations.
- Provide briefings on the child protection mandate to newly recruited national staff deployed to field offices to ensure that they are aware of related responsibilities.
- Monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from a joint review of the monitoring and reporting mechanism in coordination with the United Nations Children's Fund and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.
- Regularly review and update the list of users with access to the information management system used to record grave violation cases against children to safeguard the privacy of the individuals involved and completeness of information recorded therein.

MONUSCO accepted the recommendations and has initiated action to implement them.

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Audit of the child protection programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the child protection programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

2. United Nations Security Council resolution (SCR) 1261 (1999) on children and armed conflict (CAAC) acknowledged the protection of children in armed conflict as a fundamental peace and security concern and identified six grave violations that affect children in times of war, namely: (a) recruitment and/or use of children as soldiers; (b) killing and maiming of children; (c) sexual violence against children; (d) attacks against schools or hospitals; (e) abduction of children; and (f) denial of humanitarian access for children.

3. The Security Council also established a Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) to monitor, document and report on the six grave violations committed against children. On the basis of this information, the Secretary-General names parties that perpetrate grave violations against children in his annual report on CAAC with the goal of ending these violations. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (GoDRC) signed an Action Plan in 2012 to combat the recruitment and use of children by its armed forces and security services. The Action Plan outlined commitments and measures to be taken by the GoDRC to prevent and end violation of the rights of the children, particularly the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and security services.

4. The Child Protection Section (CPS) of MONUSCO is responsible for implementing the Mission's child protection mandate which is to: prevent and eliminate violations and abuses committed against children, including those involving the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict; protect children affected by armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and fulfil the MRM requirements. Provision of transitional care for children released from armed groups was provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) pending reunion with their families.

5. CPS was headed by a Chief at the P-5 level reporting to the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Protection and Operations, and assisted by 10 international and 16 national staff and 4 United Nations volunteers in 10 field offices. The 2017/18 and 2018/19 budgets for child protection activities were \$165,595 and \$164,610, respectively.

6. Comments provided by MONUSCO are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

7. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls in ensuring effective management of the child protection programme in MONUSCO.

8. This audit was included in the 2019 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to operational and reputational risks related to the management of the child protection programme in MONUSCO.

9. OIOS conducted this audit from August to October 2019. The audit covered the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2019. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and

medium risk areas in the MONUSCO child protection programme, which included planning activities and programme delivery.

10. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews with relevant personnel; (b) review of relevant documentation; and (c) visits to Bukavu and Goma field offices.

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

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Planning activities

Planning activities for the child protection programme were adequate, but there was a need to periodically monitor implementation of the annual work plans

12. To effectively implement its child protection mandate, MONUSCO is required to reflect child protection considerations in all mission planning instruments and processes, including strategic and technical assessments and strategic review missions.

13. OIOS' review of the results-based budgets and annual work plans of CPS for 2017/18 and 2018/19 showed that the Mission adequately planned for child protection activities to be conducted, taking into account its mandate, the Action Plan and recommendations of a strategic review conducted in 2017 which highlighted child protection as a strategic priority for the Mission. The key child protection activities to be implemented included: engagement with parties to the conflict to establish action plans to end the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict; separation of children from armed groups; and monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children. These activities were planned to support the GoDRC to achieve the Action Plan as well as Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8.7 to prohibit and eliminate recruitment and use of child soldiers. The Mission also established specific targets to achieve. For example, the results-based budget for 2018/19 had indicated 2,000 as the number of children targeted to be separated from armed groups, which the Mission exceeded by achieving 2,366 (2,024 boys and 342 girls).

14. The CPS work plan was used by its staff in field offices to prepare work plans specific to their locations. The field work plans adequately outlined activities to: mainstream child protection across all Mission components in the field through training and briefing sessions to staff; conduct advocacy, awareness and sensitization of local communities and armed groups on reducing grave violations against children; and monitor and report on grave violations against children. The work plans also identified key performance indicators for established targets.

15. However, CPS did not establish adequate mechanisms to regularly monitor the implementation of the work plans. For instance, CPS did not regularly review the extent to which the field offices had achieved their target of: 120 visits to holding cells of the national security forces to monitor the presence and secure the release of children that had been planned in its 2018/19 work plan; and 150 field missions to monitor the presence and secure the release of children from armed groups and the national military as planned in its 2018/19 work plan. As a result, the Mission could not promptly determine the instances where planned child protection activities were not being implemented as expected and take corrective actions in a timely manner, which could reduce the effectiveness of the programme.

(1) MONUSCO should periodically review the implementation of the child protection annual work plans to assess the effectiveness of the child protection programme.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 1 and stated that effective January 2020, CPS will systematically review the implementation of the child protection annual work plans through quarterly internal reports to measure results. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MONUSCO is periodically reviewing the implementation of annual work plans for the child protection programme.

B. Programme delivery

MONUSCO, together with UNICEF, had established and maintained an effective mechanism for monitoring and reporting of grave violations

16. MONUSCO is required to monitor, verify and report on the six grave violations against children committed by national security forces and non-state armed groups in the country and report the situation and progress made through the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for CAAC.

17. MONUSCO's SRSG had established a Country Task Force for Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) that was co-chaired by senior representatives from MONUSCO and UNICEF. CTFMR was active in locations in the east of the country and in Kasai province, and it verified 2,507 and 3,167 cases of grave violations against children in 2017 and 2018, respectively. In addition, CTFMR engaged and trained partners to monitor grave violations in areas where MONUSCO and UNICEF did not have a presence, including Masisi territory and Maniema in North and South Kivu provinces, respectively. CTFMR developed a template to record all verified cases of grave violations to ensure consistency in information obtained, including the age of the child, the grave violation committed, the responsible perpetrator, and the date of recruitment and separation from an armed group. CTFMR recorded verified cases of grave violations against children in the Integrated Text and Event Management system (ITEM) database which was developed, managed and maintained by MONUSCO.

18. The above contributed to tangible results towards achieving the objectives of the child protection programme. Based on the outcome of CTFMR's activities, the Secretary-General listed (in the annexes to his 2018 report on CAAC) two armed groups in the country for having perpetrated sexual violence and abduction, high levels of recruitment and use of children, and attacks on schools and hospitals. Further, MONUSCO prepared Global Horizontal Notes on a quarterly basis using information recorded in the ITEM database and issued them to the SRSG CAAC. The Notes provided highlights of MRM activities conducted during the reporting period, including: statistics on grave violations against children that had been verified by CTFMR and the responsible parties; information on armed groups that had signed road maps; and actions taken by CTFMR to support the GoDRC to implement the Action Plan. OIOS therefore concluded that MONUSCO had, together with UNICEF, effectively monitored and reported on grave violations against children.

MONUSCO assisted GoDRC to implement its Action Plan

19. MONUSCO is required to monitor and support the GoDRC to effectively implement its Action Plan to prohibit the recruitment and use of children by its armed forces and security services.

20. MONUSCO, through CTFMR, co-managed the secretariat of the Joint Technical Working Group that the GoDRC established in Kinshasa and seven provinces to monitor implementation of the Action Plan. OIOS' review of all 16 minutes of meetings held by the Working Group in Kinshasa and weekly reports on

the activities of CPS in field offices indicated that MONUSCO, as a member of CTFMR, actively monitored GoDRC's implementation of the Action Plan. For instance, MONUSCO visited 42 recruitment centres of the Congolese armed forces and police to screen for children under the age of 18 years. Of the 4,823 recruits screened, 215 children were identified and separated from the recruitment centres.

21. Following the successful implementation of the Action Plan, in 2017 the Secretary-General delisted the Congolese armed forces as a party to the conflict responsible for recruiting and using children and did not relist it during the audit period. OIOS concluded that MONUSCO had effectively supported the GoDRC's efforts to implement its Action Plan and the SDG to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of children by its armed forces and security services.

MONUSCO conducted child protection outreach and advocacy activities, including to non-state armed groups

22. The "Policy on child protection in United Nations Peace Operations" (hereafter referred to as "Policy") and a report of the Security Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Groups¹ require MONUSCO to promote local ownership and greater protection of children through advocacy, sensitization and training activities at the community level and reach out to non-state armed groups to end and prevent grave violations committed against children in the country.

23. MONUSCO conducted various outreach and advocacy activities to sensitize community members, influential community leaders, Congolese armed forces and police and non-state armed groups on protecting children from grave violations. The Mission also engaged with 30 non-state armed groups to commit them to end grave violations against children. As a result, between July 2018 and July 2019, leaders of 25 armed groups signed unilateral declarations committing to implement roadmaps to end child recruitment and other grave child violations. This resulted in a decline in the verified number of children recruited and used by armed groups from 2,313 between August 2017 and July 2018 to 1,711 between August 2018 and July 2019. In addition, MONUSCO, through CTFMR, conducted advocacy sessions with the national and provincial authorities to create awareness on emerging issues concerning grave violations against children. Through these advocacy sessions, CTFMR secured the release of hostages held by an armed group in Kasai Province. Also, the national security forces and an armed group vacated five schools that they had used/occupied for periods ranging from 7 to 72 days in North Kivu and Kasai provinces.

24. Despite MONUSCO conducting outreach and advocacy activities, there was still the risk that armed groups might not satisfactorily honour their commitments, or that children previously separated may be re-recruited. The Mission's senior management expressed commitment to continue with outreach and advocacy activities to mitigate these risks.

MONUSCO's military component needed to appoint child protection focal points and regularly report on its child protection activities

25. The Policy requires the MONUSCO's police and military components to integrate child protection into their work and designate focal points to coordinate with CPS to channel alerts of violations against children to relevant staff.

26. MONUSCO's Police Commissioner issued directives on child protection to ensure that United Nations Police (UNPOL) child protection responsibilities are integrated into planning and execution of police operations. The Police Commissioner nominated 26 child protection focal points who were assigned

¹ Report titled "conclusions on children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo" (S/AC.51/2014/3) dated 19 September 2014.

to 13 sectors and subsectors in the Mission. OIOS' review of UNPOL activity reports indicated that the focal points, jointly with other sections in some instances, sensitized the national police and local population on interventions to prevent grave violations against children.

27. The Force Commander also issued directives on the protection of children by the Force to ensure that military personnel are aware of the six grave violations and their role in identifying these in their areas of responsibility. Further, the Force Commander appointed a Force Child Protection Officer to oversee the mainstreaming of child protection in the Force. The Force ensured that its personnel were briefed on these directives through regular training sessions that were conducted by the Military Training Cell and information circulars that were issued following rotation of troops. The Mission's five military sectors/brigades had also appointed child protection focal points. However, information on the focal points of subordinate military units (including battalion headquarters and companies in the Mission), the training provided to them, and child protection activities of contingents were not available for OIOS' review.

28. The above occurred because the Mission had not developed a mechanism to require contingents to regularly report information on focal points and contingents' child protection activities to the Force Child Protection Officer. The Mission needed to address this issue to more effectively advance the implementation of its child protection mandate in the forefront locations where its contingents were deployed.

(2) MONUSCO should establish mechanisms to ensure that contingent commanders confirm appointment of child protection focal points and regularly report on their child protection activities to the Force Child Protection Officer to adequately integrate the child protection mandate into its military operations.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 2 and stated that it has put in place monthly reporting mechanisms which were initiated in September 2019 and implemented in October 2019. The reports include information on the number of child surrenders, training and major activities conducted. Focal points data was collected and consolidated for the past two years but due to military rotations, frequent personnel changes often result in non-availability of accurate information. A new Force Child Protection Directive was released on 29 November 2019 and includes the requirement for appointment of child protection focal points. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence that contingents have appointed child protection focal points, and regularly reported on their activities to the Force Child Protection Officer.

MONUSCO needed to train field national staff on its child protection mandate

29. The Policy requires CPS, in collaboration with the Integrated Mission Training Centre (IMTC), to provide child protection training and briefings to Mission personnel to effectively carry out their child protection responsibilities.

30. During induction training in Kinshasa and Goma, IMTC and CPS briefed newly deployed civilian staff, military staff officers and observers and police personnel on the Mission's child protection mandate. Since March 2019, CPS did not regularly participate in the induction training in Kinshasa to brief participants on the Mission's child protection mandate, as the number of CPS staff in Kinshasa reduced from three to one following their reassignment to other Mission locations. However, the Mission stated that IMTC staff in Kinshasa would be briefing the newly recruited personnel on the child protection mandate using training material prepared by CPS. Additionally, CPS briefed contingent training officers who in turn, trained/briefed other contingent personnel. The Force Training Cell also conducted regular training for military contingents, where the topic of child protection mandate was included.

31. However, briefings on the child protection mandate were not provided to newly recruited national staff deployed directly to their field locations because the Mission had not developed alternative mechanisms to provide induction training to them. As a result, the affected national staff may not be equipped to effectively discharge their child protection responsibilities.

(3) MONUSCO should establish mechanisms to train newly recruited national staff deployed to field offices on the child protection mandate to ensure that they are aware of their child protection responsibilities.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 3 and stated that CPS, in collaboration with IMTC, had discussed the urgent need to rectify the situation by re-evaluating and improve induction training mechanisms, content and monitoring at the field office level. IMTC and CPS will jointly plan field office visits to train three staff in each field office nominated by the respective Heads of Office. These trainees will be empowered to deliver child protection induction briefings for newly recruited personnel who report directly to the field. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has established mechanisms to train and brief newly recruited national staff in field offices on the child protection mandate.

MONUSCO needed to follow up on the implementation of recommendations of the joint MRM review

32. Best practice requires that an entity reviews its progress towards implementation of objectives and performance measures defined in key strategic documents and, if required, adjust them to enhance the ability to successfully implement its mandate.

33. In 2016, the SRSR for CAAC, UNICEF and the Department of Peace Operations commissioned an independent joint review that assessed the governance and operational structures of MONUSCO to support the implementation of MRM and issued 29 recommendations. These recommendations included the need to shift the focus of MRM to engagement with armed groups and improve the standards and procedures for MRM data collection and verification. However, CTFMR did not establish mechanisms to monitor the implementation of these recommendations. As a result, there was a missed opportunity to promote the effective delivery of the Mission's child protection mandate.

(4) MONUSCO should liaise with the United Nations Children's Fund and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from joint reviews of the monitoring and reporting mechanism.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 4 and stated that CPS will liaise with UNICEF to regularly monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from the joint review of MRM. The first such review meeting is scheduled to be held on 11 December 2019 to follow up on the implementation status of the recommendations. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence of a mechanism to monitor the implementation status of recommendations arising from joint MRM reviews.

Need to regularly review the list of users permitted to access the MRM database

34. MRM guidelines require MONUSCO to protect the identity of victims with anonymity in public reports and establish protocols to secure data and information collected on grave violations against children.

35. OIOS review of reports, including quarterly Secretary-General reports to the Security Council, Global Horizontal Notes and annual reports on CAAC, showed that the identities of child victims were not

disclosed in these reports. However, the risk of failing to safeguard their privacy remained. As of September 2019, 8 of the 35 users with access to the ITEM database were staff who no longer had child protection responsibilities. Access rights given to a former CPS staff member had not been revoked since the staff member's reassignment to another section in 2017. OIOS noted that this user accessed the database in July 2019. Also, four staff who had separated from the Mission for periods ranging from 2 to 24 months still had access to retrieve, add and delete information from the database. In addition, two users had multiple user accounts and one generic user account was assigned to various staff members in Kananga.

36. Failure to promptly disable access to staff who are no longer with CPS exposed the ITEM database to the risk of unauthorized access that could compromise the confidentiality and accuracy of the data maintained therein, thereby exposing the United Nations to reputational risks. OIOS had previously made a recommendation on a similar issue in its audit of child protection activities in MONUSCO (Report 2015/177). Subsequent to that audit, the Mission had reviewed users with access to the child protection module in the database. However, these efforts were not sustained, as the Mission did not task the newly recruited staff to regularly review the user list of the ITEM database.

(5) MONUSCO should regularly review and update the list of users with access to the information management system used to record grave violation cases against children to safeguard the privacy of the individuals involved and completeness of information recorded therein.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 5 and stated that CPS has implemented a mechanism to regularly (monthly) monitor, review and recommend update of users with access to the information management system so as to safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of the information recorded therein. As a result, staff members who had left the Section and no longer needed access to the system were removed in October 2019. ITEM will no longer be in use from March 2020 as the Mission will be moving to a new database, for which access rights will be tracked right from the start. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MONUSCO regularly reviews and updates users with access to the information management system used to record grave violations against children.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

(Signed) Eleanor T. Burns
Director, Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the child protection programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
1	MONUSCO should periodically review the implementation of the child protection annual work plans to assess the effectiveness of the child protection programme.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has periodically reviewed the implementation of annual work plans for the child protection programme.	31 December 2020
2	MONUSCO should establish mechanisms to ensure that contingent commanders confirm appointment of child protection focal points, and regularly report on their child protection activities to the Force Child Protection Officer to adequately integrate the child protection mandate into its military operations.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that contingents have appointed child protection focal points, and regularly reported on their child protection activities to the Force Child Protection Officer.	31 December 2020
3	MONUSCO should establish mechanisms to train newly recruited national staff deployed to field offices on the child protection mandate to ensure that they are aware of their child protection responsibilities .	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has established mechanisms to train and brief newly recruited national staff in field offices on child protection mandate.	31 December 2020
4	MONUSCO should liaise with the United Nations Children’s Fund and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from a joint review of the monitoring and reporting mechanism.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of a mechanism to monitor the implementation status of recommendations of the joint review of MRM.	30 June 2020
5	MONUSCO should regularly review and update the list of users with access to the information management system used to record grave violation cases against children to safeguard the privacy of the individuals involved and completeness of information recorded therein.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO regularly reviews and updates users with access to the information management system used to record grave violations against children.	30 June 2020

¹ Critical recommendations address critical and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided with regard to the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

² Important recommendations address important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

³ C = closed, O = open

⁴ Date provided by MONUSCO in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response



Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la
Stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo

United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission
in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

18 December 2019
Ref: SRSR/DMS/803/2019

To: Mr. Daeyoung Park
Chief, Peacekeeping Audit Service
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

From: Leila Zerrougui
Special Representative of the Secretary-General
and Head of MONUSCO

Subject: **Mission response to the Draft Audit Report on the audit of the child protection programme in MONUSCO (Assignment No. AP2019/620/02)**

1. Your interoffice memorandum dated 04 December 2019 (Ref: OIOS-2019-34) forwarding the Draft Audit Report on the audit of staff welfare activities in MONUSCO is acknowledged with thanks.
2. Attached please find the Mission's comments on the recommendations in the Draft Report for your consideration.
3. Thank you and best regards.

cc. Mr. François Grignon, DSRSR Protection and Operations
Ms. Nancee Oku Bright, Mission Chief of Staff
Ms. Dee Brillenburg Wurth, Chief, Child Protection Section
Mr. Ebrima Ceesay, Director of Mission Support
Major-General Thierry Lion, Deputy Force Commander
General Awale Abdounasir, Police Commissioner
Mr. Daniel Maier, Senior Planning Officer
Ms. Judith Afiagaga, Audit Focal Point
Mr. James Okwakol, Chief Resident Auditor for MONUSCO, IAD, OIOS
Ms. Cynthia Avena-Castillo, Professional Practices Section, IAD, OIOS

APPENDIX I

Management Response

Audit of the child protection programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	MONUSCO should periodically review the implementation of the child protection annual work plans to assess the effectiveness of the child protection programme.	Important	Yes	Deputy Chief Child Protection	31 December 2020	The Mission Child Protection Section (CPS) will systematically review the implementation of the child protection annual work plans through quarterly internal reports to measure Results Based Budget (RBB)/Work plan results, effective January 2020.
2	MONUSCO should establish mechanisms to ensure that contingent commanders confirm appointment of child protection focal points, and regularly report on their child protection activities to the Force Child Protection Officer to adequately integrate the child protection mandate into its military operations.	Important	Yes	Force Commander	31 December 2020	The Mission has put in place monthly reporting mechanisms which were initiated in September 2019 and implemented in October 2019. The reports include information on the number of child surrenders, training and major activities conducted. The first report for the month of November was already provided to the audit team in response to the detailed audit results (DAR). Focal Points data is collected and consolidated for the past 2 years but due to military rotations, frequent personnel changes often result in non-availability of accurate information. The current list of focal points and their contacts is attached for verification by the audit team. Due to the command structure the Force Focal Point has limited ability to directly contact Focal Points below Sector/Brigade level. A new Force Child Protection Directive was released on 29 November 2019 and includes the requirement for Focal Points.
3	MONUSCO should establish mechanisms to train newly recruited	Important	Yes	Deputy Chief, Child Protection	31 December 2020	The Mission Child Protection Section in collaboration with the Integrated Mission Training Center (IMTC) have discussed the urgent need to rectify the situation

¹ Critical recommendations address critical and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided with regard to the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

² Important recommendations address important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

Management Response

Audit of the child protection programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	national staff deployed to field offices on the child protection mandate to ensure that they are aware of their child protection responsibilities.			Section + Outreach Officer		by re-evaluating and improving induction training mechanisms, content and monitoring at the field office level. The IMTC and CPS will jointly plan field office visits to train three staff in each field office to be nominated by the respective Heads of Office. These trainees will be empowered to deliver child protection induction briefings for newly recruited personnel who report directly to the field. In the absence of the CPS staff in Kinshasa, the IMTC will use the training materials for the CPS to provide briefings on the Mission's child protection mandate during the induction trainings.
4	MONUSCO should liaise with the United Nations Children's Fund and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from a joint review of the monitoring and reporting mechanism.	Important	Yes	Chief, Child Protection Section	30 June 2020	The Mission Child Protection Section will liaise with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to regularly monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from the joint review of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms. The first of such review meetings is scheduled to be held on 11 December 2019 with UNICEF to follow up on the implementation status of the 23 recommendations. Minutes of the meeting will be shared with the Audit Team.
5	MONUSCO should regularly review and update the list of users with access to the information management system	Important	Yes	Child Protection Reporting Officer	30 June 2020	The Mission Child Protection Section has implemented a mechanism to regularly (monthly) monitor, review and recommend update of users with access to the information management system so as to safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of the information recorded therein. As a result of this mechanism, staff

Management Response

Audit of the child protection programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	used to record grave violation cases against children to safeguard the privacy of the individuals involved and completeness of information recorded therein.					<p>members who had left the Section and no longer needed access to the system were removed in October 2019. Since then, monthly reviews are conducted as seen in the attached excel documents for the months of September, October, November and December 2019 – provided for verification by the Audit Team.</p> <p>It should also be noted that Integrated Text and Event Management system (ITEM) will no longer be in use from March 2020 as the Mission will be moving to a new database, for which access rights will be tracked right from the start.</p>