



## **INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION**

### **REPORT 2014/009**

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#### **Audit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Regional Office for West Africa**

**Overall results relating to management of the operations of the Regional Office for West Africa were initially assessed as partially satisfactory. Implementation of six important recommendations remains in progress.**

**FINAL OVERALL RATING: PARTIALLY  
SATISFACTORY**

**25 March 2014**

**Assignment No. AE2013/336/02**

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# AUDIT REPORT

## Audit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Regional Office for West Africa

### I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Regional Office for West Africa.
2. In accordance with its mandate, OIOS provides assurance and advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of the United Nations internal control system, the primary objectives of which are to ensure (a) efficient and effective operations; (b) accurate financial and operational reporting; (c) safeguarding of assets; and (d) compliance with mandates, regulations and rules.
3. The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa (hereinafter referred to as WARO, which was the Office's commonly used acronym) was based in Dakar, Senegal and covered 15 countries in the West Africa region, namely: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. In addition to WARO, there were: two OHCHR country offices in the region reporting directly to OHCHR headquarters in Geneva; four human rights components of United Nations political, peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions in the region reporting both to their Heads of Mission and to the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva; and two Human Rights Advisers to United Nations Country Teams in the region reporting jointly to the relevant United Nations Resident Coordinators and the High Commissioner. Although these other OHCHR field presences did not report to WARO, WARO was required to coordinate OHCHR field presences throughout the region.
4. OHCHR established WARO in 2008 to help bridge gaps in human rights implementation at the national and regional level. The main objectives of WARO were to:
  - Provide coverage of countries in the region with no other OHCHR field presence;
  - Carry out projects in three thematic cross cutting areas that apply to the whole region: impunity and rule of law; poverty and economic, social and cultural rights; and migration; and
  - Coordinate action between OHCHR field presences and other United Nations and non-United Nations entities in the region carrying out human rights related work.
5. At the time of the audit, WARO had ten staff members, eight of whom were funded from regular budget and two from extra-budgetary funds. WARO was headed by a Regional Representative at the P-5 level, with a deputy head at the P-4 level. There was also one vacant P-3 position. WARO further had one consultant and seven national staff including two National Professional Officers, four General Service staff and a driver/messenger employed on a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) service contract. WARO also had two United Nations Volunteers. The WARO budget for the 2012-2013 biennium was \$2.2 million, of which \$0.7 million was extra-budgetary.
6. Comments provided by OHCHR are incorporated in *italics*.

## II. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

7. The audit was conducted to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of OHCHR governance, risk management and control processes in providing reasonable assurance regarding the **effective management of the operations of the Regional Office for West Africa**.

8. The audit was included in the 2013 internal audit work plan for OHCHR because WARO was identified as high risk based on the importance of the West Africa sub-region for delivering the OHCHR mandate. In addition, WARO had not been previously audited.

9. The key controls tested for the audit were: (a) coordinated management mechanisms; (b) performance monitoring mechanisms; and (c) regulatory framework. For the purpose of this audit, OIOS defined these key controls as follows:

(a) **Coordinated management mechanisms** – controls that provide reasonable assurance that overlaps in the mandate of WARO and other parts of OHCHR are adequately mitigated through effective coordination and that the office collaborates with other United Nations partners in implementing its mandate.

(b) **Performance monitoring mechanisms** – controls that provide reasonable assurance that performance metrics are: (i) established and appropriate to enable measurement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of WARO; (ii) prepared in compliance with the OHCHR strategic planning guidelines; and (iii) properly reported upon and used to manage the operations appropriately.

(c) **Regulatory framework** – controls that provide reasonable assurance that policies and procedures: (i) exist to guide the operations of WARO in the areas of procurement, travel, inventory management, human resources management, financial management, and document retention and archiving; (ii) are implemented consistently; and (iii) ensure the reliability and integrity of financial and operational information.

10. The key controls were assessed for the control objectives shown in Table 1.

11. OIOS conducted this audit from September to December 2013. The audit covered the period from January 2011 to August 2013.

12. OIOS conducted an activity-level risk assessment to identify and assess specific risk exposures, and to confirm the relevance of the selected key controls in mitigating associated risks. Through interviews, analytical reviews and tests of controls, OIOS assessed the existence and adequacy of internal controls and conducted necessary tests to determine their effectiveness.

## III. AUDIT RESULTS

13. The OHCHR governance, risk management and control processes examined were assessed as **partially satisfactory** in providing reasonable assurance regarding the **effective management of the operations of the Regional Office for West Africa**. OIOS made seven recommendations to address issues identified in the audit.

14. WARO established good working relationships with UNDP and other United Nations and non-United Nations entities in the region. It coordinated effectively with OHCHR field presences in the West

Africa region through monthly teleconferences and played an active role in the work of the United Nations Regional Directors Team. The performance targets in the most recent strategic planning document of WARO were specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. WARO closely monitored its expenditures against each budgeted activity and submitted monthly reports, containing observations on the human rights situation in the region as well updates on the WARO work plan, to OHCHR headquarters as required. In the administrative area, WARO complied with the OHCHR policies for mission reports, time and attendance monitoring and the use of vehicles.

15. Coordinated management mechanisms were assessed as partially satisfactory because a formal knowledge management function had yet to be established as required by the OHCHR Policy on Regional Offices. There was also a lack of a strategic engagement with the regional intergovernmental organization and a need for WARO to better document its prioritization of involvement at the country level. Performance monitoring mechanisms were assessed as partially satisfactory because lessons learned were not explicitly incorporated into subsequent planning documents. Regulatory framework was assessed as partially satisfactory because a lack of succession planning had led to prolonged vacancies of key posts that affected the operational effectiveness of WARO. In addition, the current office building of WARO was structurally unsafe, and WARO did not comply with OHCHR administrative requirements regarding the annual physical verification of inventory, backup of electronic files, recovery of private telephone costs and purchase of air travel tickets.

16. The initial overall rating was based on the assessment of key controls presented in Table 1 below. The final overall rating is **partially satisfactory** as the implementation of six important recommendations remains in progress.

**Table 1: Assessment of key controls**

Business objective	Key controls	Control objectives			
		Efficient and effective operations	Accurate financial and operational reporting	Safeguarding of assets	Compliance with mandates, regulations and rules
<b>Effective management of the operations of the Regional Office for West Africa</b>	(a) Coordinated management mechanisms	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Satisfactory	Partially satisfactory
	(b) Performance monitoring mechanisms	Partially satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
	(c) Regulatory framework	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory
<b>FINAL OVERALL RATING: PARTIALLY SATISFACTORY</b>					

### **A. Coordinated management mechanisms**

A formal knowledge management function for systematic collection and sharing of information in the region had not been established

17. The OHCHR Policy on Regional Offices required that WARO act as a ‘knowledge hub’, collecting and sharing information in the region related to publications, lessons learned, best practices, rosters of consultants, and experiences in cooperating with Non-Governmental Organizations among others. WARO organized monthly teleconferences with other OHCHR field presences in the region,

which provided an opportunity for the receipt and dissemination of such information. WARO also provided examples where it had forwarded information to other field presences in the region. However, WARO did not perform this ‘knowledge hub’ function in a systematic manner. Even within WARO, the lack of a shared drive resulted in information being held in multiple locations by different staff with no clear and well documented structure. WARO therefore lacked a consolidated master database of key knowledge for the region that either staff of WARO or other field presences could directly access. As a result, WARO found it difficult to retrieve basic information such as contact details and mission reports quickly and easily, hampering efficient management of the operations. There was no explicit process for the collection and dissemination of lessons learned and other key information from and to other OHCHR field presences in the region. There was therefore an increased risk that key information and knowledge would not be institutionalized and that lessons learned and insights from staff could be lost once they left WARO.

**(1) The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should establish a formal process to collect and disseminate knowledge throughout the West Africa region including a consolidated database to store all key information.**

*OHCHR accepted recommendation 1 and stated that, starting from the first quarter of 2014, WARO would prepare and circulate a monthly highlight on information and knowledge sharing. This, along with other relevant information, would be stored in a dedicated drive that is easy to access by all staff of the office. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of documentary evidence on the implementation of the knowledge management measures and confirmation that WARO has established a consolidated database of all key information for the region.*

Strategic engagement with the regional intergovernmental organization was lacking

18. One of the responsibilities of OHCHR regional offices was to work alongside regional intergovernmental organizations. The Policy Guidance on Stakeholders’ Participation on OHCHR Planning Process stated that the principles of participation highlighted in the human rights-based approach must be applied to the OHCHR planning process. In the West Africa region, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), based in Abuja, Nigeria was the key intergovernmental organization. It had a political mission with a human rights office as well as a Regional Court of Justice. The Court had competence to rule on human rights violations through an individual complaint procedure. ECOWAS was therefore a key partner for WARO. In 2010, the OHCHR Regional Representative wrote to the President of the Court identifying five areas where OHCHR and the Court could work together. WARO had also conducted a number of conferences, meetings and working sessions in cooperation with ECOWAS. However, despite these interactions, WARO did not have a strategic relationship with ECOWAS encompassing a high-level engagement including exploration of the possibility of joint planning and operations. The OHCHR Sub-Regional Notes (a term used by OHCHR for strategic plans of regional offices and henceforth used in this report) for the West Africa region for 2012-13 and 2014-17 did make reference to ECOWAS but neither document emphasized the strategic importance of the engagement with ECOWAS or identified concrete steps OHCHR should take to develop a strategic relationship.

**(2) The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should forge a strategic engagement with the Economic Community of West African States and seek this key stakeholder’s participation in the OHCHR planning process, as required by OHCHR policy documents.**

*OHCHR accepted recommendation 2 and stated that in a regional consultation meeting held in Dakar in January 2014 ECOWAS participated in contributing to the definition and planning of joint activities. Based on the action taken by OHCHR, recommendation 2 has been closed.*

Need to better document the prioritization of WARO involvement at the country level

19. WARO was responsible for covering 15 countries in the region. However, in its Sub Regional Note for 2012-13 the office had planned activities for only five countries. In seven countries with OHCHR field presence and in three countries without field presence (including Nigeria, where a temporary Human Rights Adviser was deployed subsequent to the development of the Sub-Regional Note for 2012-13), no specific activities were planned. While it was necessary for the office to prioritize its limited resources, OIOS could not find any documented evidence of an assessment of the risks and opportunities involved in each country or of an informed decision taken to focus on some countries more than others. The Sub-Regional Note for 2014-17 identified priority countries where WARO would undertake its planned activities but did not describe the criteria for selecting these countries or explain why some countries were not considered for activities related to certain expected accomplishments. One country without any OHCHR field presence, Ghana, was not considered for any planned activities without an explanation of why this was the case. Therefore, there was a lack of transparency as to how WARO prioritized its activities in the region.

**(3) The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should document the reasoning behind the definition of its priorities as part of its planning process, including reasons for the selection of priority countries.**

*OHCHR accepted recommendation 3 and stated that WARO would ensure that the reasoning behind its thematic and country priorities is clearly spelled out in the Sub-Regional Note for 2014-2017 at the mid-year review stage. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of a document describing the reasoning behind the definition of the priorities of WARO as part of its planning process, including reasons for the selection of priority countries.*

The working arrangements with UNDP, as the local administrative service provider, were functioning as intended

20. UNDP provided a number of administrative services to OHCHR field offices in their role as local service provider. A global Memorandum of Understanding between UNDP and OHCHR governed the provision of these services. OIOS discussed the local working relationship with both UNDP Senegal and WARO. The WARO Regional Representative and WARO staff expressed satisfaction with the level of services provided by UNDP. Each organization stressed the strength of the working relationship and neither raised any concerns. There were regular meetings and contact between UNDP and WARO. UNDP further reported to OIOS that the WARO staff were familiar with UNDP rules and regulations and submitted requests for services correctly and within appropriate timelines. OIOS therefore concluded that the working arrangements between UNDP and WARO were functioning as intended.

WARO had effective coordination with other field presences in the region

21. WARO organized monthly teleconferences for all the OHCHR field presences in the region. The Human Rights Division of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the OHCHR Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division at headquarters also regularly attended the calls. OIOS reviewed the minutes from a selection of these teleconferences and found that they served as an effective mechanism for coordination and discussion with other field presences in the region.

## WARO had effective coordination arrangements with the Regional Directors Team

22. WARO was a member of the United Nations Regional Directors Team (RDT), which consisted of heads of the United Nations regional entities in Dakar. WARO served as the convening agency for two countries in the region and played an active role in the RDT meetings. The Secretariat of the RDT stressed the important role that WARO played in different activities. OIOS therefore concluded that WARO had effective coordination arrangements with the RDT.

## **B. Performance monitoring mechanisms**

### Lessons learned were identified but not explicitly incorporated into subsequent plans

23. The OHCHR end of cycle review process required offices to identify lessons learned. The 2012 End of Year Report for WARO identified four lessons learned. Two of them were directly applicable to the activities planned for and undertaken in 2013. While WARO verbally explained what follow-up action had been taken in response to the lessons learned, OIOS could not find evidence that they were explicitly considered and applied in subsequent strategic and planning documents. The lack of a shared drive and effective knowledge management system, as discussed earlier in this report, made it even more important for WARO to reflect key lessons learned in its key documents such as the Sub-Regional Note. Without this, there was a risk that the lessons identified in the end of year reports would not be consistently applied by WARO in the medium to long term, even where some immediate action was taken in the short term.

**(4) The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should systematically capture lessons learned and identify follow-up action in key planning documents to ensure that they are applied in future activities.**

*OHCHR accepted recommendation 4 and stated that WARO had started to implement this in the context of the planning exercise for the 2014 to 2017 Management Plan, which was based on the lessons learned and follow-up actions. This would be further developed in preparation for the subsequent Annual Reports and work/cost plans, to more explicitly highlight the lessons learned and related actions. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of a planning document that explicitly highlights lessons learned and identifies specific actions to be taken to apply them in future activities.*

### In the most recent strategic planning document WARO set SMART performance targets

24. Guidelines for the development of Sub-Regional Notes issued by OHCHR headquarters stated that expected accomplishments and major outputs should be SMART, which the guidelines defined as: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. The expected accomplishments in the Sub-Regional Notes of WARO and the related indicators were clearly derived from the global OHCHR strategy as required. The performance targets in the 2010-11 and 2012-13 Sub-Regional Notes were not fully SMART. In particular, the targets were often neither specific nor measurable. However, in the most recent Sub-Regional Note for 2014-17 WARO corrected this shortcoming. The document included more than 30 targets, split by specific countries, across nine different expected accomplishments. OIOS concluded that all the targets were SMART compliant.



### WARO took action to start using the OHCHR Performance Monitoring System

25. OHCHR had developed a system called the Performance Management System (PMS) to enable field offices and headquarters units to upload their planning documents and track progress against their objectives electronically. In previous years, WARO had used the system incorrectly. In 2012, the WARO work plan differed from the version uploaded in PMS. The working version had a number of additional activities and a different distribution and total amount of budget. The 2012 End of Year Report was completed by WARO with reference to the work plan uploaded in PMS, and not the actual work plan that WARO followed. As a result, there was a lack of transparency in the performance monitoring and reporting of WARO. However, WARO staff subsequently received training on PMS and, whilst the audit was still ongoing, the office prepared the Sub-Regional Note 2014-17, Annual Work Plan 2014 and End-of-Cycle Report 2012/13 using the system. As WARO took action to start using PMS effectively, OIOS concluded that no further recommendation was necessary in this regard.

### WARO closely monitored actual expenditure against budgeted expenditure

26. OHCHR was developing a module of PMS to enable managers to track, on a quarterly basis, what had been spent on each activity. However, this functionality was not available at the time of the audit but was planned to be made available in 2014. In the meantime, WARO tracked expenditures against planned activities in internal spreadsheets, which allowed it to closely monitor the budget for each activity and anticipate potential shortfalls and overspending in advance.

### Monthly reports were completed and submitted

27. OIOS confirmed that WARO completed and submitted regular monthly reports, containing observations on the human rights situation in the region as well updates on the WARO work plan, to headquarters, as required by the OHCHR Standard Operating Procedure on Monthly Reports from all Field Presences. In 2013, WARO started submitting these reports also via PMS.

## **C. Regulatory framework**

### Vacancies undermined the operational effectiveness of WARO

28. The Regional Representative post had been vacant from March 2012 until April 2013 and a P-3 post was vacant at the time of the audit. Within a short space of time in early 2012, both the P-5 and the P-4 staff member left to begin new roles in other OHCHR duty stations. After this, the P-3 staff member became Officer-in-Charge on a P-4 special post allowance. WARO employed a number of national staff, United Nations Volunteers and Junior Professional Officers during the period where there was no Regional Representative. However, for over a year it did not meet the minimum staffing requirements as set out in the OHCHR Policy on Regional Offices of one P-5, one P-4 and one P-3 in addition to at least one General Service staff. As of November 2103, WARO once again met the minimum staffing requirements for Regional Offices. However, the prolonged vacancies of two key posts clearly affected the operational effectiveness of WARO and its ability to deliver its planned activities. In 2012, WARO achieved an implementation rate of just 60 per cent and was unable to begin nine of its planned 25 costed activities. Given that both of the senior staff departures were internal moves, OHCHR should have been able to anticipate the vacancies and minimize their impact (such as delaying one or both of the transfers or expediting the recruitment process for replacements). OIOS found no evidence that this happened. OHCHR also did not have a formal succession planning process in place.

**(5) OHCHR should reinforce succession planning to ensure that key vacancies are filled promptly and that the staffing structures are maintained at the level envisaged in the OHCHR Policy on Regional Offices.**

*OHCHR accepted recommendation 5 and stated that this would be done during 2014 through the development and implementation of a tracking system to better monitor and plan for senior staff movements, including in the field. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of details of action taken to strengthen succession planning in OHCHR.*

#### WARO accommodation was unsafe

29. WARO occupied offices provided free of charge by the Government of Senegal. An assessment by the OHCHR Field Safety and Security Unit in April 2012 identified several structural weaknesses in the office complex that WARO shared with the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Information Centre and United Nations Women. The report concluded that the risk of the building collapsing was high. In December 2012, the Field Safety and Security Unit conducted an assessment of an alternative premises and concluded that the compound's location and infrastructure made it suitable for housing WARO, although the report highlighted a number of measures that needed to be taken to ensure that the building was fully Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) compliant. It had been intended that OHCHR and the United Nations Information Centre would both move to this new location but after the two organizations failed to reach an agreement on the division of space, only the United Nations Information Centre moved in and OHCHR continued looking for a new location. WARO therefore remained located in its current unsafe accommodation. In addition, the building's generator had broken down and there was periodically no running water in WARO. However, as WARO was intending to move out of the current premises to a new MOSS compliant accommodation, it was reluctant to invest in any replacements or back-ups.

**(6) The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa, in coordination with OHCHR headquarters, should develop an action plan for the move to new Minimum Operational Security Standards compliant office accommodation as soon as possible.**

*OHCHR accepted recommendation 6 and stated that negotiations with the Government of Senegal regarding a new building to accommodate WARO were ongoing. Investigation of other alternatives was also being undertaken in consultation with the local United Nations Department for Safety and Security support. Recommendation 6 remains open pending receipt of a clear and realistic action plan for moving to MOSS compliant office accommodation.*

#### Lack of compliance with OHCHR administrative instructions

30. OIOS identified four areas where WARO did not comply with OHCHR administrative instructions contained in the OHCHR Field Office Manual and various Standard Operating Procedures:

- WARO did not complete an annual physical verification of its inventory, as required by the Field Office Manual;
- Although WARO regularly backed up the electronic files it did not do so systematically and did not send copies of the backed up data to OHCHR headquarters twice a year, as required by the Standard Operating Procedure on Archiving and Storing Information in Field Presences;

- For calls from fixed line telephones, WARO did not receive itemized bills from its supplier and therefore had no controls in place to recover the cost of private calls made by staff using these lines, as required by the Field Office Manual;
- WARO had no formal approval process in place for purchasing air travel and did not comply with the instructions issued by OHCHR headquarters in 2009 to purchase tickets at least 14 days in advance of departure.

31. WARO explained that it sometimes had difficulty following OHCHR administrative requirements because the Field Office Manual was only available in English while the administrative staff of WARO were French speakers. WARO added that it received limited support and supervision from OHCHR headquarters in administrative matters.

**(7) OHCHR should provide additional support to the Regional Office for West Africa staff to help them comply with the administrative requirements set out in the Field Office Manual and the Standard Operating Procedures.**

*OHCHR accepted recommendation 7 and stated that the Programme Support and Management Services would conduct consultations with the administrative staff of WARO during the first half of 2014 on all aspects of administration, and would follow up with a visit as/if required to provide more direct support. Recommendation 7 remains open pending confirmation from OHCHR that additional support has been provided to WARO to help them comply with administrative requirements, including those related to inventory, travel, data backup and telephone expense controls.*

Mission reports were completed when required

32. The Deputy High Commissioner had issued instructions that required staff to complete a mission report upon their return from official travel. OIOS reviewed the list of all travel undertaken by the WARO staff in 2012. WARO provided OIOS with mission reports for each of these travels with the exception of travel to attend training sessions for which a mission report was not required. OIOS concluded that the requirement to prepare mission reports was fully complied with.

Time and attendance records were kept for each staff member

33. As required by the OHCHR Field Office Manual, WARO had designated a time and attendance assistant, who maintained and verified time, attendance and leave records for all local and international staff. OIOS reviewed the controls in place related to time and attendance records and found them to be adequately designed.

WARO complied with the OHCHR Vehicle Policy

34. WARO had three vehicles. In accordance with the OHCHR Vehicle Policy, it maintained vehicle log books that the drivers filled upon completion of each journey. As a standard practice, WARO did not transport non-United Nations staff in the official vehicles and therefore did not require passengers to sign any waiver forms. Petrol expenditures were prepaid onto a payment card that drivers presented at garages meaning that they did not need to pay for petrol out of petty cash. WARO kept receipts for the purchases of petrol and tracked petrol expenditure on a four monthly basis. OIOS reviewed the petrol expenditure from 2012 and the first two trimesters of 2013. Average expenditure was \$3,320 and the difference between the most and least expensive trimesters was 15 per cent. OIOS therefore concluded that WARO was complying with the OHCHR Vehicle Policy.

#### **IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

35. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the Management and staff of OHCHR for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

*(Signed)* David Kanja  
Assistant Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

## STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

## Audit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Regional Office for West Africa

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / Important <sup>2</sup>	C/ O <sup>3</sup>	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date <sup>4</sup>
1	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should establish a formal process to collect and disseminate knowledge throughout the West Africa region including a consolidated database to store all key information.	Important	O	Submission to OIOS of documentary evidence on the implementation of the knowledge management measures and confirmation that WARO has established a consolidated database of all key information for the region.	31 December 2014
2	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should forge a strategic engagement with the Economic Community of West African States and seek this key stakeholder's participation in the OHCHR planning process, as required by OHCHR policy documents.	Important	C	Recommendation closed	Implemented
3	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should document the reasoning behind the definition of its priorities as part of its planning process, including reasons for the selection of priority countries.	Important	O	Submission to OIOS of a document describing the reasoning behind the definition of the priorities of WARO as part of its planning process, including reasons for the selection of priority countries.	30 September 2014
4	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should systematically capture lessons learned and identify follow-up action in key planning documents to ensure that they are applied in future activities.	Important	O	Submission to OIOS of a planning document that explicitly highlights lessons learned and identifies specific actions to be taken to apply them in future activities.	31 December 2014
5	OHCHR should reinforce succession planning to ensure that key vacancies are filled promptly and that the staffing structures are maintained at the level envisaged in the OHCHR Policy on Regional Offices.	Important	O	Submission to OIOS of details of action taken to strengthen succession planning in OHCHR.	31 December 2014

<sup>1</sup> Critical recommendations address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

<sup>2</sup> Important recommendations address important deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

<sup>3</sup> C = closed, O = open

<sup>4</sup> Date provided by OHCHR in response to recommendations.

## STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

## Audit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Regional Office for West Africa

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / Important <sup>2</sup>	C/ O <sup>3</sup>	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date <sup>4</sup>
6	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa, in coordination with OHCHR headquarters, should develop an action plan for the move to new Minimum Operational Security Standards compliant office accommodation as soon as possible	Important	O	Submission to OIOS of a clear and realistic action plan for moving to MOSS compliant office accommodation.	31 December 2014
7	OHCHR should provide additional support to the Regional Office for West Africa staff to help them comply with the administrative requirements set out in the Field Office Manual and the Standard Operating Procedures.	Important	O	Submission to OIOS of a confirmation that additional support has been provided to WARO to help them comply with administrative requirements, including those related to inventory, travel, data backup and telephone expense controls.	31 December 2014

# **APPENDIX I**

## **Management Response**

## Management Response

## Audit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Regional Office for West Africa

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / Important <sup>2</sup>	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should establish a formal process to collect and disseminate knowledge throughout the West Africa region including a consolidated database to store all key information.	Important	Yes	Head of Regional Office for West Africa	31/12/2014	Starting from the first quarter or 2014, WARO is preparing and circulating a monthly highlight on information and knowledge sharing. This, along with other relevant information, will be stored in a dedicated drive that is easy to access by all staff of the office.
2	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should forge a strategic engagement with the Economic Community of West African States and seek this key stakeholder's participation in the OHCHR planning process, as required by OHCHR policy documents.	Important	Yes	Head of Regional Office for West Africa	30/06/2014	This outcome of the regional consultation held in Dakar in January 2014 saw ECOWAS participation in contributing to the definition and planning of joint activities. Documentation on this is attached in the form of the agreed "Dakar Road Map", the corresponding communiqué de press and exchange of letters from the ECOWAS Court of Justice on joint activities.
3	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should document the reasoning behind the definition of its priorities as part of its planning process, including reasons for the selection of priority countries.	Important	Yes	Head of Regional Office for West Africa	30/09/2014	The WARO will ensure that the reasoning behind its thematic and country priorities is clearly spelled out in the Subregional Note for 2014-2017 at the mid-year review stage.

<sup>1</sup> Critical recommendations address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

<sup>2</sup> Important recommendations address important deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal 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 Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Regional Office for West Africa

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / Important <sup>2</sup>	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
4	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa should systematically capture lessons learned and identify follow-up action in key planning documents to ensure that they are applied in future activities.	Important	Yes	Head of Regional Office for West Africa	31/12/2014	WARO has started to implement this in the context of the planning exercise for the 2014 to 2017 Management Plan, which is based on the lessons learned and follow up actions. This will be further developed in preparation for the subsequent Annual Reports and work/cost plans, to more explicitly highlight the lessons learned and related actions.
5	OHCHR should reinforce succession planning to ensure that key vacancies are filled promptly and that the staffing structures are maintained at the level envisaged in the OHCHR Policy on Regional Offices.	Important	Yes	Director of FOTCD	31/12/2014	This will be done during 2014 through the development and implementation of a tracking system to better monitor and plan for senior staff movements, including in the field.
6	The OHCHR Regional Office for West Africa, in coordination with OHCHR headquarters, should develop an action plan for the move to new Minimum Operational Security Standards compliant office accommodation as soon as possible.	Important	Yes	Head of Regional Office for West Africa	31/12/2014	Negotiations with the Government of Senegal regarding a new building to accommodate the WARO are ongoing. Investigation of other alternatives is also being undertaken in consultation with local DSS support.
7	OHCHR should provide additional support to the Regional Office for West Africa staff to help them comply with the administrative requirements set out in the Field Office Manual and the Standard Operating Procedures.	Important	Yes	Chief, Programme Support and Management Services	31/12/2014	PSMS will conduct consultations with the administrative staff of WARO during the first half of 2014 on all aspects of administration, and will follow up with a visit as/if required to provide more direct support.