



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2021/070

**Audit of conduct and discipline
activities in the United Nations Mission
in the Republic of South Sudan**

**The Mission needed to improve misconduct
prevention efforts and address staff
perceptions on handling of misconduct**

**17 December 2021
Assignment No. AP2020-633-03**

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of measures implemented by UNMISS to manage conduct and discipline in the Mission. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2019 to 30 June 2021 and included a review of the three-pronged strategy for addressing conduct and discipline issues in peace operations, namely: (a) prevention of misconduct, (b) enforcement of standards of conduct, and (c) remedial action.

UNMISS senior leadership established a forum through which conduct and discipline matters were discussed and promoted shared values and expectations of conduct through awareness raising and training. The Mission had implemented a comprehensive misconduct risk management process and established adequate mechanisms for confidential reporting of allegations. In collaboration with the United Nations Country Team and other partners, UNMISS had established an adequate victim assistance mechanism and partnered with community-based organizations to raise awareness and promote safe reporting in local communities. However, the Mission needed to improve misconduct prevention efforts and address staff perceptions on handling of misconduct.

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

- Establish effective measures, including accountability through the performance management system, to ensure completion of mandatory training by all staff;
- Establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure that all newly deployed personnel receive mandatory induction training;
- Develop a comprehensive plan to address challenges identified in the assessment of Mission staff welfare activities and task the Conduct and Discipline Team to proactively take on an advisory role to field welfare committees to promote alignment of initiatives with misconduct prevention goals;
- Regularly review the list of staff with access to the shared misconduct reporting email to ensure authorized only access; and
- Educate staff on existing policies to improve their understanding and manage staff perceptions on the handling of misconduct in the Mission.

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

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Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS).

2. Core values and principles to be upheld by staff members are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, whereby every staff member is called upon to uphold “the highest levels of efficiency, competence and integrity.” The Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service¹ delineate fundamental values and principles and establish the highest standards of conduct which is an obligation for all personnel. The United Nations field personnel are also guided as to their conduct by the policy on “Accountability for Conduct and Discipline in Field Missions”² that focuses on how they are to be held accountable for misconduct and lack of discipline.

3. The Secretariat’s commitment to ensuring that all United Nations personnel, whether civilian, police, or military, are accountable for their conduct while in the service of a United Nations field mission was reinforced in the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, launched jointly with Member States. Strengthening the conduct of peacekeeping operations and personnel is a core part of this initiative. The United Nations has a three-pronged strategy to address misconduct: prevention of misconduct, enforcement of United Nations standards of conduct, and remedial action. The Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) is responsible for enforcing United Nations policies on conduct in peacekeeping missions and special political missions and works closely with the Departments of Peace Operations and Peacebuilding and Political Affairs. The Under-Secretary-General, DMSPC oversees the conduct and discipline function for all field missions. The Conduct and Discipline Service (CDS) of the Administrative Law Division (ALD) provides overall direction for conduct and discipline issues.

4. Misconduct refers to the violations of the United Nations standards of conduct (under the Charter, the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, or other relevant administrative issuances or policy documents developed for specific categories of personnel); or failure to observe the Standards of Conduct expected of an international civil servant. There are two categories of misconduct: (i) serious misconduct; and (ii) misconduct. Serious misconduct includes sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), serious and complex fraud, abuse of authority, conflict of interest, all cases involving risk of loss of life, serious criminal acts, gross mismanagement, and waste of substantial resources.

5. The Mission’s Conduct and Discipline Team (CDT) serves as the principal advisor to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for all matters related to conduct and discipline including SEA involving all categories of personnel. CDT is responsible for providing guidance and technical advice to the Mission on issues relating to conduct and discipline; assisting the Mission in developing strategies to prevent, identify and respond effectively to misconduct; and ensuring that all United Nations policies, procedures and guidelines on addressing misconduct are adequately disseminated to personnel in the Mission.

6. UNMISS CDT is headed by a Chief at the D-1 level who reports to the SRSG. The CDT has 14 staff members consisting of six international, four national staff, one United Nations police officer, one military staff officer, and one international and one national United Nations volunteer (UNV). The Special

¹ <https://icsc.un.org/Resources/General/Publications/standardsE.pdf>

² <https://conduct.unmissions.org/documents-standards>

Victims' Rights Officer (SVRO), an UNMISS international staff member, reports to the United Nations Victim Rights Advocate and the UNMISS Deputy SRSG Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator. The approved operating budgets of CDT was \$103,794 and \$79,864 and \$64,500 for 2018/19 and 2019/20, and 2020/21, respectively.

7. Comments provided by UNMISS are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

8. The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of measures implemented by UNMISS to manage conduct and discipline in the Mission. The audit focused on the three-pronged strategy for addressing conduct and discipline issues in peace operations and addressed three main audit questions:

- a) To what extent has the mission established adequate measures to prevent misconduct?
- b) To what extent has the mission established effective mechanisms for reporting, recording and timely addressing cases of misconduct?
- c) To what extent has the mission taken adequate remedial action in cases of substantiated misconduct?

9. This audit was included in the 2021 risk-based work plan of OIOS because of the immediate and detrimental consequences of some misconduct types on the victims and other stakeholders. It was also due to the high operational and reputational consequences that conduct and discipline matters may bear to the United Nations as well as the importance of ethical behaviour, professional and personal conduct of all civilian and uniformed personnel to the overall organizational culture in motivating staff to deliver their best effort.

10. OIOS conducted this audit from May to October 2021. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2019 to 30 June 2021. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risks areas which included: prevention of misconduct, enforcement of standards of conduct, and remedial action.

11. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews with key personnel, (b) review of two annual quality assurance and seven quarterly CDT reports, misconduct risk assessments and other relevant documentation, (c) review of data on misconduct allegations from the Misconduct Tracking system (MTS) and analysis of the 196 cases (provided by CDT) that were reported in the period from 1 January 2019 to 30 April 2021, and (d) testing of induction training and recruitment vetting records for a random sample of 93 out of 2,029 newly onboarded personnel.

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

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Prevention of misconduct

Need to ensure personnel are adequately trained

13. The Secretary-General made a commitment towards creating a culture of prevention through pursuing initiatives designed to reconnect all personnel to the core values of the United Nations. The

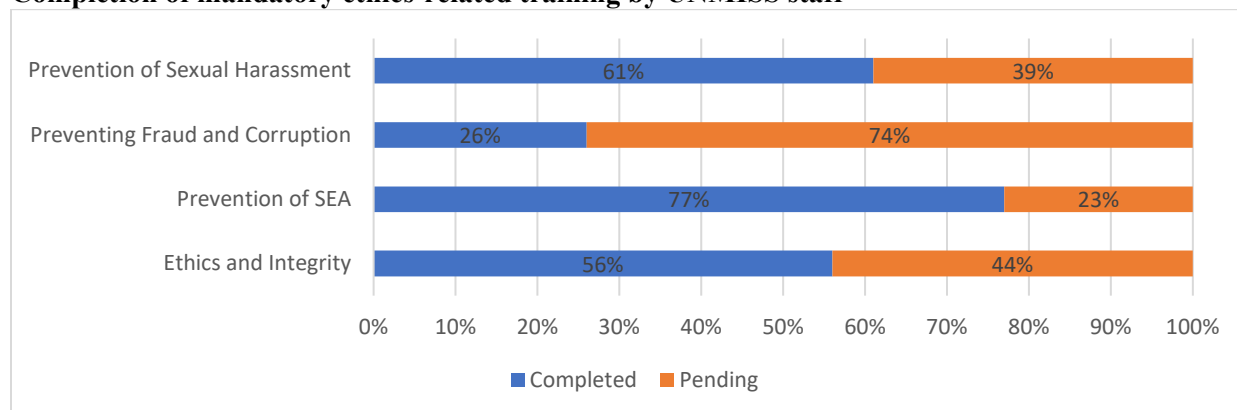
Mission is required to create an environment that promotes ethical conduct, and all personnel are expected to adhere to the highest standards of behaviour.

14. UNMISS established the Conduct and Discipline Advisory Group (CDAG), a forum where CDT briefed UNMISS senior leadership on conduct and discipline matters, and key aspects of prevention, enforcement, and remedial actions being taken by the Mission. The CDAG meetings were chaired by the SRSG and attended by representatives from all Mission components. Members discussed and reviewed actions on SEA and other allegations, status of investigations, misconduct risk management, training, and awareness raising activities. The majority (72 per cent) of UNMISS staff who responded to the OIOS accountability survey³ agreed that UNMISS senior leadership are a United Nations role model in words and actions; and the same proportion of respondents agreed that UNMISS leadership set a culture of accountability in the Mission.

15. One of the ways the Mission communicates and promotes shared values and expectations of conduct is through awareness raising and training. As part of awareness raising efforts, UNMISS circulated in early 2020 the Mission’s code of conduct to remind all staff of their obligations to act with the highest standards of integrity and conduct. CDT also posted awareness raising messages on the Mission’s intranet and disseminated brochures and other information during outreach activities.

16. There are four mandatory training courses for staff at all levels, which relate to ethics and integrity. The completion rates of these courses are published on the management dashboards and are included in the senior managers' compacts. On average, 55 per cent of staff had completed all four ethics and integrity related mandatory courses as of 31 August 2021, with completion rates at 47 per cent for staff at P-5 and above level. Although there was active engagement by CDT via reminder broadcasts, a mission directive and follow-up on target dates for 100 per cent course completion, more effective measures needed to be implemented to ensure full compliance.

Figure 1
Completion of mandatory ethics-related training by UNMISS staff



Source: Management dashboard mandatory training data (accessed on 31 August 2021).

17. UNMISS had also developed Mission-specific training on the United Nations standards of conduct and core values, policies, and procedures on preventing and addressing misconduct, staff duties and responsibilities relating to misconduct, protection from retaliation, and relevant national laws and

³ Staff survey was conducted as part of the OIOS Evaluation of the United Nations accountability system, which was administered online and included an assessment of adequacy of communication on ethics and integrity; perception of personnel of the Mission leadership’s commitment to ethical values and standards of conduct; and of handling conduct and discipline matters.

regulations. These topics were covered in various CDT trainings, including induction briefings; training of trainers for military and police; tailored briefings on specific topics for senior managers, military commanders and contractors; and briefings to local communities, South Sudan National Police and Government officials. During the review period, UNMISS CDT, Military and Police trainers conducted 316 training sessions attended by 11,319 attendees.

18. More than two-thirds (68 per cent) of UNMISS staff who responded to the OIOS accountability survey believed that standards on ethics and integrity have been communicated somewhat or extremely effectively, while the rest were either neutral or believed that they were communicated somewhat or extremely ineffectively. About 66 per cent of staff believed that training surrounding ethical standards and integrity has been sufficient, while 34 per cent were either neutral or thought it was somewhat or totally insufficient.

Figure 2
Staff perception of how effectively the standards on ethics and integrity are communicated

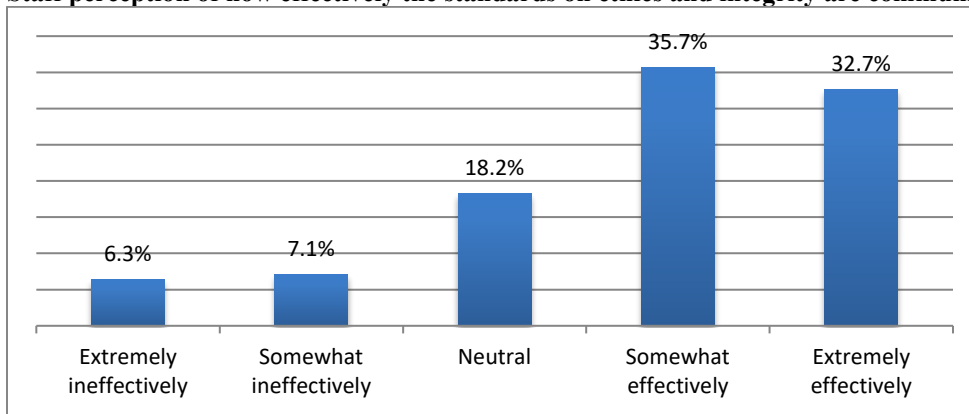
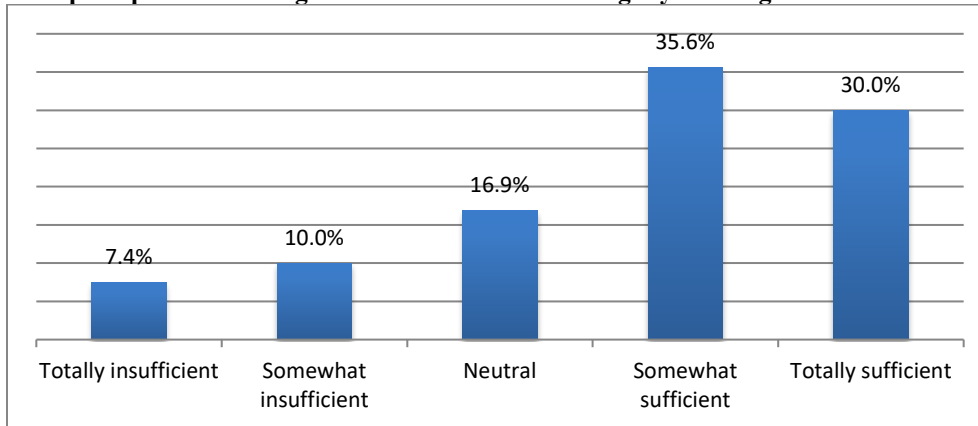


Figure 3
Staff perception of the degree to which ethics and integrity training has been sufficient



19. CDT quarterly reports showed that 75 per cent of 16,408 contingent uniformed personnel (Formed Police Units and troops) who joined the Mission during the audit period had attended the mandatory induction briefings. Moreover, OIOS estimated, by extrapolating a sample of attendance records, that approximately 80 per cent of civilian staff attended these briefings. However, the Mission was unable to provide evidence of attendance of all personnel newly deployed to these important induction and awareness raising briefings. This was mainly due to ineffective document retention and lack of proper handover of issues from departing personnel.

(1) UNMISS should establish effective measures, including accountability through the performance management system, to ensure completion of mandatory training by all staff.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 1 and stated that the Mission would strengthen its efforts, including through further engagement with senior leadership and managers to ensure completion of mandatory training by all staff. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of evidence of completion of mandatory training by all staff.

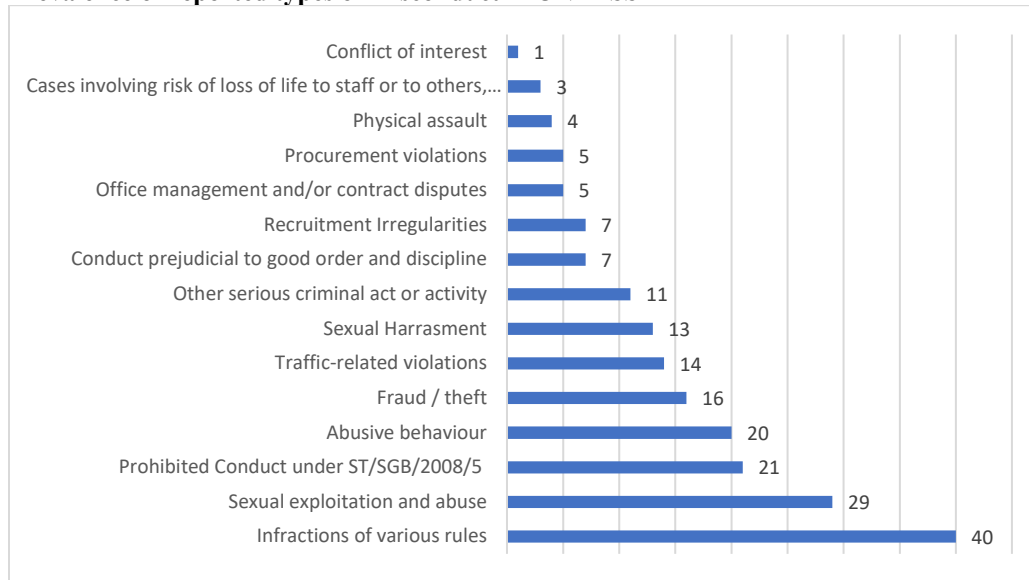
(2) UNMISS should establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure that all newly deployed personnel receive mandatory induction training.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 2 and stated that it would develop a mechanism to monitor attendance at induction sessions on conduct and discipline, but technical issues might prevent consistent recording of attendance at online training. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence that a system for ensuring all newly deployed personnel receive mandatory induction training has been established.

Comprehensive misconduct risk management was being implemented

20. Effective prevention activities constitute a solid foundation for ensuring that all personnel deployed in field missions maintain the highest standards of conduct and integrity. An important way of preventing misconduct is identifying risks before misconduct occurs. Missions are expected to develop risk management plans, which should consider the level of risk and specific risk factors, linked to possible misconduct by their personnel, with particular emphasis on SEA.

Figure 4
Prevalence of reported types of misconduct in UNMISS



Source: OIOS analysis of MTS data on reported allegations

21. UNMISS had implemented a comprehensive misconduct risk management process in two phases, using the methodology prescribed in the DMSPC risk management toolkit. Phase one focused on SEA and phase two incorporated all other forms of misconduct. The process included continuous update of the risk profile of each of the 10 field offices based on analysis of SEA risks, including risk drivers such as cultural attitudes and prevailing socio-economic conditions of adjacent communities, and adequacy of staff welfare

facilities. It also recommended action plans to mitigate identified risks, including refresher briefings and townhall meetings to remind staff of United Nations values, and of practices that could constitute misconduct. The risk assessment documents were approved by the SRSG. The Mission had also established a SEA Task Force with responsibility for overseeing the related risk management efforts. It held periodic meetings to review and discuss trends related to SEA allegations and the status of SEA mandatory training, and the progress of collaboration efforts with the community-based complaint mechanisms (CBCM). CDT held meetings with heads of field offices to review progress of implementation of action plans and emerging issues.

22. While the SEA misconduct risk assessment was completed for all 10 field offices, the COVID-19 pandemic movement restrictions delayed CDT's visits to field offices to facilitate the second phase. However, as of September 2021, CDT together with respective heads of field offices, had completed the misconduct risk assessment for all forms of misconduct for 6 out of 10 field offices (Aweil, Bentiu, Bor, Rumbek, Torit and Yambio). The assessment process included trend analysis and discussions with personnel (civilian, military and police) in each field office and representatives of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) to determine the types of misconduct that are more likely to occur, guided by those cases recorded in MTS. A review of field offices misconduct risk profiles noted that they properly captured risks related to all types of possible misconduct, included appropriate mitigating measures and, at the same time, included the challenges being faced in implementing them, such as inadequate welfare and recreation activities and facilities, and low acceptance and disregard by some personnel for the United Nations more stringent standards of conduct. The mitigating measures also included priority focus areas, such as awareness raising, regular updating of off-limit areas, stricter enforcement of camp rules and continued engagement with CBCMs.

23. In September 2021, the Mission initiated the misconduct risk assessment for the remaining two field offices (Wau and Kuajok).

The Mission vetted all newly onboarded personnel, except staff from the managed reassignment programme

24. The United Nations seeks to ensure that only individuals with the highest standards of integrity, competence and efficiency are hired. To prevent individuals who have previously engaged in any form of substantiated misconduct, in particular sexual harassment and SEA from being rehired, the Mission conducts mandatory vetting of candidates being considered for recruitment.

25. A review of a sample of 93 recruitment records out of 2,029 staff newly onboarded by the Mission during the audit period, comprising civilian staff (international, national and UNV), and military and police staff officers showed that at the request of UNMISS, 92 were vetted by DMSPC/ALD and the Volunteer Service Centre (VSC) prior to onboarding. ALD and VSC confirmed to the Mission the absence of prior record of misconduct in MTS and Clear Check. One of the 93 was not vetted as they were transferred from a Secretariat Department under the managed reassignment programme.

Need to significantly improve staff welfare, recreation and living conditions across the Mission

26. Provision of welfare and recreation for mission personnel is important for promoting adequate working and living conditions for staff often deployed in hardship environments and under stressful post-conflict conditions. Welfare and recreation strengthen the morale and discipline of United Nations personnel and play an important role in misconduct prevention.

27. The UNMISS Welfare Unit had developed a workplan and was coordinating with field welfare committees to facilitate recreational and social welfare events across the Mission to improve staff wellbeing. This included gyms, health facilities, sports competitions, bars and cafeterias. However, in 2021,

after visiting all field offices, the SRSG made staff welfare a priority area and initiated an assessment of welfare activities and facilities (welfare assessment), which was conducted by the Office of the Director of Mission Support. At the time of the audit, seven field offices (Aweil, Bentiu, Kuajok, Malakal, Torit, Wau and Yambio) had been assessed.

28. OIOS reviewed the welfare assessments conducted by the Mission and visited three field offices (Juba, Bentiu and Malakal) and through discussions with the Welfare Unit staff and Field Staff Union representatives noted multiple challenges to ensure staff wellbeing. For instance, there was often limited variety of food and absence of good recreational facilities such as gyms. OIOS was informed that because of this, staff turned to less than optimal behaviour such as excessive alcohol consumption. Furthermore, living conditions were inadequate in some locations with staff having to share limited kitchen and ablution facilities, making it difficult to implement effective social distancing and to allow good personal hygiene. These conditions were not new, as an earlier OIOS audit (report 2019/113, dated 19 December) on staff welfare and counselling activities had recommended the need for UNMISS to establish a staff welfare and recreation strategy and ensure proper coordination and oversight of such activities. This recommendation has not yet been implemented.

29. The UNMISS Staff Welfare Executive Committee (SWEC) remained inactive during the review period mainly due to concerns raised by the Field Staff Union on its composition. The lack of oversight and direction by SWEC meant that field office staff welfare committees were not actively functioning in Juba, Bor and Pibor and therefore, issues identified as part of the welfare assessment had not been adequately addressed for more than two years. Also, welfare initiatives and activities for civilian and uniformed personnel were not effectively monitored to ensure their adequacy and alignment with the Mission's misconduct prevention goals. For example, none of the field offices submitted reports nor received guidance from SWEC with respect to welfare matters during the review period.

30. Therefore, there is a need for the Mission to implement adequate welfare and recreational activities to improve staff living conditions and wellbeing, reduce the impact of working in a stressful environment and further mitigate incidences of poor behaviour that may lead to misconduct.

(3) UNMISS should strengthen the oversight of welfare activities by: (a) developing a comprehensive plan to address challenges identified in the assessment of Mission staff welfare activities; and (b) tasking the Conduct and Discipline Team to proactively take an advisory role to field welfare committees to promote alignment of initiatives with misconduct prevention goals.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the welfare committees have been strengthened, and the Welfare Unit was working to support them to address staff needs and requirements. A comprehensive plan would be presented during the next SWEC meeting. Furthermore, CDT is active in the SWEC and would include assessment of welfare and recreation as part of the misconduct risk management. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of a copy of the comprehensive plan to address challenges in staff welfare.

B. Enforcement of standards of conduct

There was a need to regularly review staff access to misconduct data

31. The functions of reporting and analysing misconduct have been identified as high-priority activities by the Secretary-General and Member States as they are critical to strengthened accountability in the overall handling of misconduct. It is the duty of all United Nations personnel, whether they are civilian, military

or police, to report misconduct to the officials whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action. All reporting of allegations of misconduct should be centrally captured for prompt assessment, referral for investigation and timely follow-up.

32. UNMISS established mechanisms for confidential reporting of allegations, including private rooms, a dedicated CDT hotline and email address. The Mission trained 49 CDT focal points in 10 field offices to handle reports of misconduct allegations. Results of the 2019 Staff Engagement Survey indicated that most staff (89 per cent) in UNMISS know what to do and whom to approach to report unethical behaviour or wrongdoing.

33. During the period January 2019 to April 2021, CDT provided OIOS information on the 196 misconduct allegations that were received. OIOS review noted that CDT timely recorded in MTS all 196 allegations of misconduct within seven days of receipt. CDT employed sequential numbering when capturing allegations in MTS, which enabled confirmation by the Case Management Team Supervisor and Chief, CDT that all allegations had been captured. However, CDT had not regularly reviewed the list of staff who receive misconduct allegations to ensure access on the “need to know” basis. As a result, user access of a former UNMISS staff member who separated in July 2019 was not timely deprovisioned. Although CDT subsequently acted and amended the list of staff with access to the misconduct reporting email account, considering the confidential nature of misconduct information and the high turnover of Mission personnel, there was a need to regularly review access to misconduct allegations.

(4) UNMISS should regularly review the list of staff with access to the shared misconduct reporting email to ensure authorized only access.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 4 and stated that the list was updated, and it would continue to review and revise the staff access as personnel changes occur. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence of regular review of the list of staff with access to the shared misconduct reporting email.

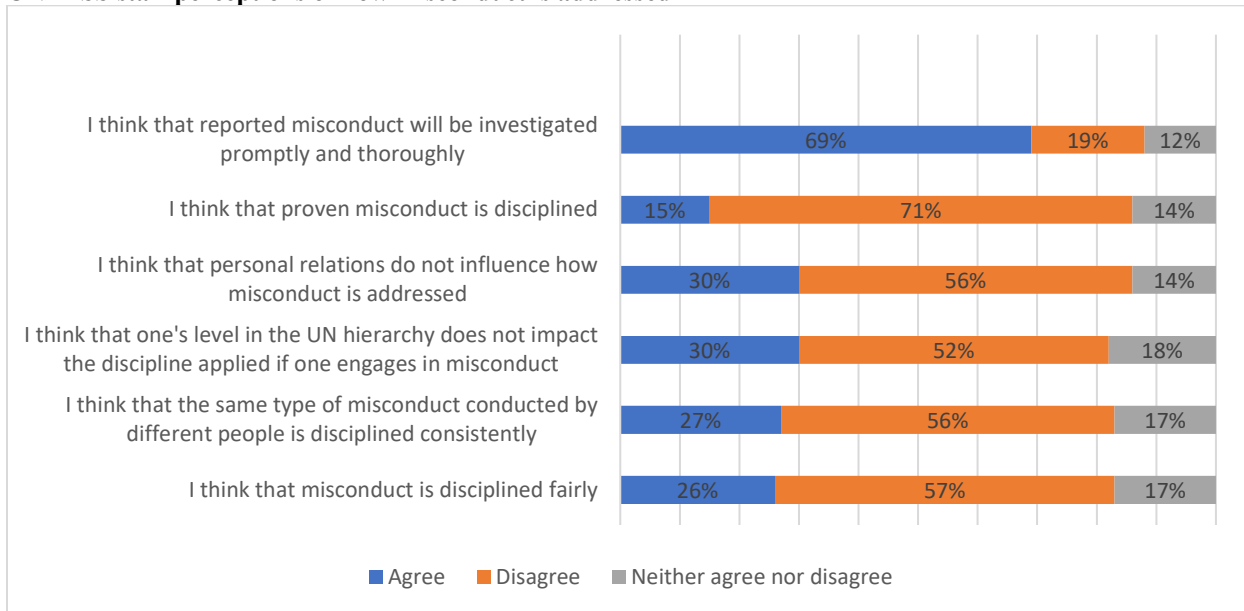
Need to address staff perceptions on the handling of misconduct

34. Knowing that misconduct is disciplined fairly and consistently reinforces the culture of accountability for wrongdoing and strengthens the staff morale. Timely and proper assessment of alleged wrongdoing is critical to demonstrating the Mission’s overall commitment to create a culture of “zero-tolerance” to misconduct.

35. The OIOS evaluation of the organization culture in peacekeeping operations⁴ showed that there was a perception by personnel at various levels that a “culture of impunity” was widespread, as senior leaders and managers did not sufficiently enforce accountability for performance and misconduct. As shown in figure 5, more than a half (57 per cent) did not agree that misconduct is disciplined fairly. Moreover, most staff (71 per cent) did not believe that proven misconducted is disciplined. These figures are low considering the importance of addressing misconduct in a timely manner.

⁴ Evaluation of the organizational culture in peacekeeping operations (A/75/803)

Figure 5
UNMISS staff perceptions of how misconduct is addressed



36. Above perceptions could be partly because under the existing policy, except in cases of prohibited conduct, staff members and third parties are not entitled to information on the investigation or action taken on the case, such as those involving fraud and corruption, theft, and misappropriation. However, this may not have been well communicated as the Mission-specific results of the IED evaluation highlighted that there were low levels of trust in the accountability systems for misconduct, making references to the absence of disciplinary measures. Of the UNMISS personnel who indicated on the OIOS accountability survey that they had reported misconduct during the last two years, 86 per cent had not been updated on the results of their report. Field Staff Union representatives also believed that inadequate knowledge of the processes for handling misconduct contributed to these staff perceptions. Therefore, to help dispel such perceptions, UNMISS could have a more proactive communications strategy to raise awareness of what can (and cannot) be communicated in relation to reports of wrongdoing, including reminding staff that a Compendium of Disciplinary Measures: Practice of the Secretary-General is circulated annually. This provides information on the most common examples of misconduct and their disciplinary consequences.

37. During the period January 2019 to April 2021, 60 of the 196 allegations were not investigated because allegations were not misconduct or were resolved informally, or due to a lack of sufficient evidence, unknown victims or offenders. Of the 136 investigated allegations, 59 (43 per cent) were substantiated, while 28 (21 per cent) were not. Disciplinary action, such as summary dismissal, demotion, repatriation, or letter of reprimand, was applied to 29 of the 59 cases. The remaining 30 cases were under review by CDT, troop contributing countries or DMSPC/ALD.

38. The time taken to assess complaints and complete investigations, while often valid, may be another factor contributing to the staff perception, although 69 per cent of UNMISS staff who responded to the OIOS accountability survey believed that misconduct will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. During the audit period, CDT was timely in assessing and classifying reported allegations of misconduct within the required seven days and referring them to investigative bodies (OIOS, the Mission's Special Investigations Unit, Force Military Police, or the Professional Standards Unit) for action. However, it took an average of six months to investigate the 59 cases.

39. The time taken to complete case investigations depended on factors not entirely under the control of the investigator such as the nature of the allegation and ease of evidence gathering including witness availability.

40. The Mission had also implemented an effective mechanism for following up on open investigations, with CDT maintaining a spreadsheet to track the progress of all open cases under investigation, as well as the finalization of sanctions or administrative actions, and reported on their status on a quarterly basis to CDS. In addition, in December 2020 the status of all 61 allegations older than one year in MTS was reviewed in the annual quality assurance exercise and reported to CDS.

(5) UNMISS should take action to educate staff on the existing policies to improve their understanding and manage staff perceptions on the handling of misconduct in the Mission.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 5 and stated that it would complement existing efforts such as town halls in field offices, with regular broadcasts on relevant topics, wider distribution of the Practice of the Secretary-General in Disciplinary Matters, and the compilation of an aide memoire on the relevant disciplinary processes. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of evidence of action taken to educate staff on the existing policies to improve their understanding and manage perceptions on the handling of misconduct in the Mission.

C. Remedial action

The Mission was collaborating with partners to assist victims of SEA

41. The United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel calls for the United Nations system to provide, in a coordinated manner, assistance to individuals with needs directly arising from an incident of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse. Such assistance can be, for example, medical care, psychosocial support, legal assistance and immediate material needs such as food, clothing and safe shelter.

42. UNMISS working together with the UNCT, comprising United Nations agencies funds and programmes, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), international and national non-governmental organizations, had established a country-wide victim assistance and tracking mechanism. There was also a comprehensive list of implementing partners and other service providers in South Sudan where victims of SEA could access medical, legal and psychosocial support and other assistance. Of the 29 alleged SEA victims identified in the audit period, 10 received psychosocial, legal and medical assistance, as well as temporary shelter assistance. The rest of the victims either declined support, were unknown/unidentified, or the perpetrator was not United Nations related personnel. The average time taken to provide support to victims from the initial misconduct report date was about 73 days in 2019 but was reduced to 25 days in 2020.

43. However, some support services for livelihoods activities, assistance in repatriation/relocation, shelter and scholastic materials were not available locally for 6 of the 10 victims in four states (Juba, Aweil, Torit and Yambio). In such cases, where possible, the Mission provided exceptional assistance. For example, UNMISS provided shelter for a victim of SEA where funding was not available from service providers at the victim's location. UNMISS together with the HCT had prepared a draft proposal for funding of \$338,000 from the Trust Fund in Support of Victims of SEA by United Nations personnel, with the objective of strengthening the capacity of some partners and service providers in the services they provided to victims.

44. OIOS concluded that UNMISS, in collaboration with the UNCT and other partners, had established an adequate victim assistance mechanism.

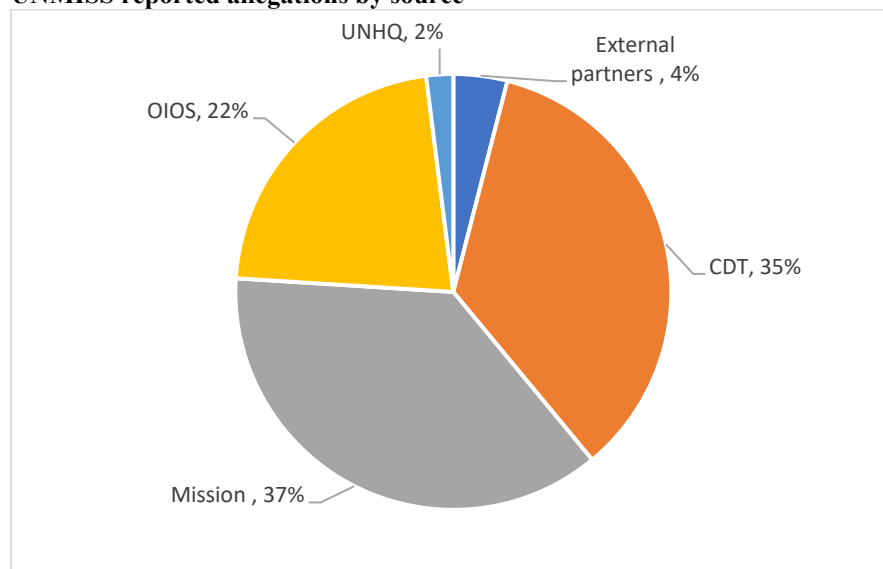
Community awareness raising activities were adequate within the Mission’s resources

45. Targeted awareness-raising and external communications activities help to inform the general population about the United Nations standards of conduct, reporting misconduct, and assistance available to victims. CBCMs enable the people of the country to bring forward known cases of misconduct.

46. During the audit period, CDT reached 6,581 people in eight field office locations through presentations in workshops, trainings, and awareness raising events and activities. UNMISS established 17 CBCMs in five states while UNCT was responsible for the other five states. UNMISS also partnered with community-based organizations and appointed 20 focal points (9 female and 11 male), who were trained by CDT on receiving and forwarding complaints, promoting safe reporting at CBCM centres, the victim’s assistance referral pathways, and awareness raising. This enabled the 17 CBCMs to reach an additional 2,376 local community members through presentations and various awareness raising events. CDT also met with other stakeholders such as State Government officials from the Ministries of Justice, and Gender, Child and Social Welfare, and local activists, to strengthen strategic partnerships.

47. CDT undertook 14 visits to 17 CBCMs to evaluate their effectiveness and to provide refresher training to CBCM focal points and made recommendations on effective use of awareness raising materials during outreach events and how to better document activities in reports to CDT. These activities may have impacted on the increase in misconduct allegations reported in the audit period, which amounted to 39 per cent of all misconduct reported to CDT via hotlines and external partners (e.g., CBCMs, the PSEA Taskforce and Government institutions) as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6
UNMISS reported allegations by source



Source: OIOS analysis of data on MTS allegations

48. However, keeping attendance records of various awareness raising outreach activities by gender could assist CDT to better plan for future activities. Some efforts had been made to collect gender disaggregated information of participants for all awareness raising outreach activities. For example, the gender of 4,064 and 1,441 participants in the CDT and CBCM outreach events respectively had not been

captured in the reports. Management acknowledged the importance of obtaining gender disaggregated data for assessing the extent to which awareness raising activities were reaching women and for promoting gender parity in outreach activities, but explained it was not always possible to collect this data. This was because of the difficulty of counting people attending open air awareness raising events and due to low representation of women in some areas due to cultural reasons preventing their participation. Management also noted that every attendee is a potential influencer of change. OIOS did not make a recommendation.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

49. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of UNMISS 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 conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Important ⁵	C/O ⁶	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁷
1	UNMISS should establish effective measures, including accountability through the performance management system, to ensure completion of mandatory training by all staff.	Important	O	Submission of evidence of completion of mandatory training by all staff.	31 December 2022
2	UNMISS should establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure that all newly deployed personnel receive mandatory induction training.	Important	O	Submission of evidence that a system for ensuring all newly deployed personnel receive mandatory induction training has been established.	30 June 2022
3	UNMISS should strengthen the oversight of welfare activities by: (a) developing a comprehensive plan to address challenges identified in the assessment of Mission staff welfare activities; and (b) tasking the Conduct and Discipline Team to proactively take an advisory role to field welfare committees to promote alignment of initiatives with misconduct prevention goals.	Important	O	Submission of a copy of the comprehensive plan to address challenges in staff welfare.	30 June 2022
4	UNMISS should regularly review the list of staff with access to the shared misconduct reporting email to ensure authorized only access.	Important	O	Submission of evidence of regular review of the list of staff with access to the shared misconduct reporting email.	31 March 2022
5	UNMISS should take action to educate staff on the existing policies to improve their understanding and manage staff perceptions on the handling of misconduct in the Mission.	Important	O	Submission of evidence of action taken to educate staff on the existing policies to improve their understanding and manage perceptions on the handling of misconduct in the Mission.	30 June 2022

⁵ 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.

⁶ Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

⁷ Date provided by UNMISS in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response



To: Ms. Eleanor T. Burns, Director
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Date: 8 December 2021

From: Nicholas Haysom
Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission
United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

Subject: **Management response to the report on the audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (Assignment No. AP2020-633-03)**

1. Your draft report dated 1 December 2021 on the audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (Assignment No. 2020/633/03) is received with thanks.
2. UNMISS accepts all the recommendations. Our management response, including an action plan for each recommendation, is attached as requested.
3. I would like to thank OIOS for the continued support provided to the work of UNMISS.

cc: Mr. Paul Egunsola, UNMISS
Ms. Maria Costa, UNMISS
Mr. Timothy Crowley, UNMISS
Mr. Qazi Ullah, UNMISS
Mr. Gordon Wardley, UNMISS
Mr. Aggrey Kedogo, UNMISS
Ms. Elizabeth Gregory, UNMISS
Ms. Sara Goerg, UNMISS
Ms. Yvette Lopez, UNMISS
Ms. Maya Fridman, IAD, OIOS

Management Response

Audit of conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

<i>Rec. no.</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Critical¹/ Important²</i>	<i>Accepted? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>Title of responsible individual</i>	<i>Implementation date</i>	<i>Client comments</i>
1	UNMISS should establish effective measures, including accountability through the performance management system, to ensure completion of mandatory training by all staff.	Important	Yes	Chief Human Resources Section and Chief Integrated Mission Training Centre	31 December 2022	UNMISS will strengthen the existing measures and efforts to ensure completion of mandatory training by all staff including through further engagement with senior leadership and managers.
2	UNMISS should establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure that all newly deployed personnel receive mandatory induction training.	Important	Yes	Chief Integrated Mission Training Centre and Chief Conduct and Discipline Team	30 June 2022	A mechanism to record and monitor attendance at induction training sessions on conduct and discipline issues will be developed and applied to all induction training but technical issues might prevent us from being able to consistently record attendance at online training.
3	UNMISS should strengthen the oversight of welfare activities by: (a) developing a comprehensive plan to address challenges identified in the assessment of Mission staff welfare activities; and (b) tasking the Conduct and Discipline Team to proactively take an advisory role to field welfare committees to promote alignment of initiatives with misconduct prevention goals.	Important	Yes	Chief Welfare Unit and Chief Conduct and Discipline Team	30 June 2022	After Covid-related restrictions have been eased, the welfare committees have been strengthened, and the Welfare Unit is working to support them, in both Juba and field locations, to ensure that the needs and requirements of staff in each location are being met and taken care of. A comprehensive plan will be presented during the next Staff Welfare Executive Committee Meeting.

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 conduct and discipline activities in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

<i>Rec. no.</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Critical¹/ Important²</i>	<i>Accepted? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>Title of responsible individual</i>	<i>Implementation date</i>	<i>Client comments</i>
						CDT is in the process of ensuring that the welfare and recreation situation is assessed as part of the Misconduct Risk Management process. CDT is active in the Staff Welfare Executive Committee but does not have staff in all field offices. As such, advisory services to individual field office welfare committees will have to be provided remotely and during visits to the field offices.
4	UNMISS should regularly review the list of staff with access to the shared misconduct reporting email to ensure authorized only access.	Important	Yes	Chief Conduct and Discipline Team	31 March 2022	The list is currently up-to-date and will be reviewed every time there are personnel changes and revised accordingly.
5	UNMISS should take action to educate staff on the existing policies to improve their understanding and manage staff perceptions on the handling of misconduct in the Mission.	Important	Yes	Chief Conduct and Discipline Team	30 June 2022	Existing efforts such as CDT town halls in field offices (which resumed in 2021 after a Covid-related suspension in 2020) will be complemented with regular broadcasts on relevant topics, wider distribution of the Practice of the SG in Disciplinary Matters, and the compilation of an aide memoire on the relevant disciplinary processes.