



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2017/129

Audit of the public information programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

MONUSCO needed to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of its public information programme

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Audit of the public information 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 public information 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 effectiveness of the public information programme in MONUSCO. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2017 and included a review of: (a) formulation and implementation of the public information strategy; (b) dissemination of public information and communication channels; (c) clearance and archiving of public information outputs; (d) media relations and capacity-building; and (e) impact assessment.

MONUSCO implemented effective controls to ensure: there was adequate coordination between the Strategic Communications and Public Information Division and other Mission sections in preparing and disseminating public information; appropriate tools and platforms to disseminate public information were employed; and public information outputs were cleared by authorized officials prior to release. However, the Mission needed to: evaluate the impact of its public information activities and update its communication strategy; include local television and radio stations in its media monitoring activities; and prepare an exit/sustainability strategy for Radio Okapi.

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

- Review and update its communication strategy and prepare an exit/sustainability strategy for Radio Okapi;
- Assess the need to include local television and radio stations in its media monitoring activities;
- Regularly monitor contracts for its television programmes to ensure they are valid, and evaluate quarterly the contractors' performance and use the results to improve services provided;
- Assign archiving responsibilities to public information officers in field offices and train them on archiving and records management;
- Prepare procedures for the accreditation of journalists and train all public information officers involved in the accreditation process;
- Conduct a training needs assessment for public information officers and train its public information officers; and
- Define methodologies to be used in evaluating the impact of its public information activities; and allocate financial resources to evaluate the public information programme.

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

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Audit of the public information 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 public information programme in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).
2. The Strategic Communications and Public Information Division (SCPID) is responsible for implementing the public information programme in MONUSCO, which includes: disseminating the Mission's strategic priorities to audiences involved in and affected by the peace process; and providing credible, accurate, timely and non-partisan information to local and international audiences about the peace process and the role of the Mission.
3. The SCPID is headed by a Director at the D-1 level who reports to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The Director is assisted by 31 international staff, 2 United Nations volunteers and 204 national staff. The Division has seven units comprising: Office of the Spokesperson; Publications; Multimedia; Office of the Coordinator; Outreach; Radio Okapi; and the Public Information Office in Goma. The Division also has staff in Bukavu, Lubumbashi, Bunia, Beni, Kalemie, Kisangani, Uvira and Kananga field offices.
4. The approved budgets for communications and public information for 2015/16 and 2016/17 were \$1.03 million and \$1.36 million respectively.
5. Comments provided by MONUSCO are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness of the public information programme in MONUSCO.
7. This audit was included in the 2017 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to operational and reputational risks related to the public information programme in MONUSCO.
8. OIOS conducted this audit from August to October 2017. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2017. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risk areas in the public information programme, which included: (a) formulation and implementation of the public information strategy; (b) dissemination of public information and communication channels; (c) clearance and archiving of public information outputs; (d) media relations and capacity-building; and (e) impact assessment.
9. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews of key personnel; (b) reviews of relevant documentation; (c) analytical reviews of data; (d) test of controls; and (e) verification of controls in place for archiving public information outputs.
10. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Formulation and implementation of the public information strategy

Need to review and update the communication strategy

11. The Department of Public Information/Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support (DPI/DPKO/DFS) Policy on strategic communications and public information requires: the Director of SCPID (Director) to develop and implement a public information strategy for the Mission that: (a) sets clear communication goals that support the Mission's objectives; (b) provides an overview narrative on public information in the Mission; (c) describes the audiences to be reached and platforms to be used; (d) identifies the resources required; and (e) outlines how the achievement of communication goals will be evaluated. The Policy also requires MONUSCO to regularly review and update the strategy. Security Council resolution 2348 (2017) on MONUSCO mandate requires the Mission's exit from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the country) to be phased and progressive and tied to specific targets developed through dialogue with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as through consultations with other stakeholders.

12. The MONUSCO communication strategy was aligned to the Mission's mandate for 2016/17, and included: an analysis of the operational environment and factors that could affect implementation of the public information programme; the target audience of the communication products (including the local population, government officials, civil society, national and international media, United Nations personnel, Congolese in the diaspora, troop-/police-contributing countries and United Nations Member States); communication platforms to be used, including mainstream communication channels (analog) and electronic (digital), news conferences, video production, web dissemination, social media, publications, live webcasts, photos and outreach campaigns; and a requirement to evaluate the Mission's communication activities. However, MONUSCO did not: update and align the communication strategy to the Mission's mandate for 2017/18; identify the resources required to achieve the communication objectives and to manage the communication platforms outlined in the strategy; and review and evaluate the strategy to ascertain its effectiveness.

13. The above resulted because the Mission did not establish mechanisms to regularly review, update and evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of the communication strategy. As a result, the communication strategy did not include an exit strategy for public information activities and there was an unmitigated risk that the Mission's strategic communication and public information activities might not adequately and effectively support the implementation of the Mission's mandate.

(1) MONUSCO should regularly review and update its communication strategy to ensure that: (a) it is aligned with the Mission's mandate; (b) the resources required to attain the communication objectives and manage the communication platforms are included; and (c) it is periodically evaluated for effectiveness.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 1 and stated that it would regularly review and update its communication strategy. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of an updated communication strategy.

There was adequate coordination between the SCPID and other sections in the Mission

14. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires the Director to: be part of the Mission senior management team and advise the Mission leadership on strategic

communication, and work with other Mission components as part of the overall mission communications strategy. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy and Guidance for public information in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations requires the public information component to: facilitate the work of substantive components by supporting their activities and helping them achieve their objectives; and establish mechanisms for regular consultation with other sections in determining public information priorities and tasks.

15. OIOS review of documentation, attendance to senior management group meetings and Radio Okapi programmes indicated the following:

- Radio Okapi worked with the Gender Affairs Section to mainstream gender matters in the editorial content of the radio programmes in September 2017 to commemorate the gender week. This resulted in Radio Okapi airing 14 radio programmes on various gender-specific issues, which featured participants from the Mission and the local population. The SCPID, in conjunction with the Communications and Information Technology Section, displayed messages on all the Mission's official desk telephones to create awareness among staff members and invited them to listen to Radio Okapi programmes;
- Radio Okapi, in conjunction with the Conduct and Discipline Section, commenced a three-month outreach and sensitization campaign in September 2017 to inform the local population about sexual exploitation and abuse. These messages were broadcast in the five national languages (French, Swahili, Lingala, Kikongo and Tshiluba);
- The Multimedia Unit circulated daily to staff, local media and embassies photos depicting activities conducted by various Mission sections as part of implementing the mandate;
- The Publications Unit collaborated with various Mission sections, (including HIV/AIDS, Electoral, Conduct and Discipline, Joint Human Rights, Force, Police and the Disarmament, Demobilization/Repatriation, Reintegration, and Resettlement Division) to document feature stories and articles that were included in the monthly magazine "Echos de la MONUSCO";
- The Director attended the weekly senior management group meetings and provided updates on the latest events covered by the SCPID. In addition, the Director promptly acted on follow-up actions arising from the meetings by timely issuing press statements and releases to present the position and views of the Mission leadership on significant emerging issues in the country; and
- The Spokesperson's Office liaised with various Mission sections to prepare for and conduct joint weekly press briefings. The press briefings were jointly presented by: (a) the Spokesperson; (b) the Military Public Information Officer (MPIO); (c) a representative of other United Nations entities in the country; (d) Police Public Information Officer (PPIO); and (e) representatives from the Mission's substantive components.

16. OIOS concluded that: MONUSCO had implemented adequate mechanisms to coordinate public information activities among the various Mission sections; the Director advised the Mission's senior management on strategic communications and public information issues; and the SCPID worked with other Mission components in developing and implementing the overall Mission communications strategy.

B. Dissemination of public information and communication channels

MONUSCO had adequate mechanisms to engage with local and international media organizations

17. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires MONUSCO to engage all relevant media, hold regular press briefings, issue regular information releases, respond to press enquiries and prepare daily media summaries and analyses for use by Mission officials and the United Nations Headquarters.

18. Interviews with staff, review of documentation and attendance to three press conferences indicated that:

- MONUSCO hosted a weekly press conference at its headquarters in Kinshasa to brief the media on recent activities and interventions of/by MONUSCO and other United Nations entities in the country. The conference, which lasted for 45 minutes, was relayed to Goma via video conference and attended by journalists representing local and international media organizations who were given an opportunity to ask questions. Radio Okapi provided a live broadcast of the press conference;
- Staff of the public information field office in Goma and the MPIO held two press briefings every week that focused on activities in North Kivu Province. Representatives of substantive units in Goma were also invited to brief the journalists; and
- The Spokesperson prepared daily media summaries highlighting significant news events on the country and the Mission, and submitted them to DPI for presentation at the noon briefings held at the United Nations Headquarters, after approval by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

19. OIOS concluded that MONUSCO had implemented adequate mechanisms to regularly communicate with local and international media through press briefings and report to the Mission officials and the United Nations Headquarters.

MONUSCO employed adequate multimedia platforms to disseminate public information

20. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires MONUSCO to: deliver high standard multilingual content through the most appropriate platforms including radio, television, web, social media and photos; and establish digital and social media platforms to promote and distribute content and engage with audiences.

21. The Multimedia Unit implemented the Mission's communication strategy by delivering audio visual products to create awareness of activities performed by different Mission sections in support of the Mission's mandate. The Multimedia Unit:

- Managed MONUSCO social media sites including Facebook, twitter, YouTube and Flickr by regularly posting updates, videos and photos on current events pertaining to the Mission. During the audit period, the audience to the Mission's twitter and Facebook accounts increased by 130 per cent (from 89,472 to 205,815 followers) and 21 per cent (from 21,475 to 26,081 followers) respectively;

- Produced 61 editions of “ONU Hebdo”, a weekly 15-minute video programme that features various activities of the Mission. MONUSCO partnered with local television stations in the country to air these video programmes. The Multimedia Unit sent emails to the public information mailing list (comprising all Mission staff, the United Nations Country Team, the diplomatic community in the country, accredited media and non-governmental organizations) to inform them of the broadcast schedule for the video programmes. A review of a sample of five out of eight broadcast schedules issued in June and July 2017 indicated that the Mission planned to broadcast the programmes on 15 television stations in Kinshasa (10), Goma (4) and Bukavu (1); and
- Kept up-to-date the Mission’s intranet and Internet sites by posting the current events of the Mission.

22. OIOS concluded that MONUSCO had identified and established adequate and appropriate public information multimedia products and platforms to promote and distribute public information content and engage with audiences.

Need to include local television and radio stations in media monitoring activities

23. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires MONUSCO to: monitor and report on both traditional and digital media; and prepare daily media summaries and analyses for use by Mission officials and United Nations Headquarters.

24. The Media Monitoring Unit in the Spokesperson’s Office daily monitored local newspapers, websites of major international media organizations and radio stations, including Radio Okapi and Radio France International for news related to the country and impacting on the Mission’s operations. Specifically, the Unit reviewed and analysed news on elections, politics, human rights, security and the economy, and prepared a weekly summary report on the activities of the United Nations entities in the country as reported in the local press. The Unit subsequently distributed highlights and summaries of these analyses to the public information mailing list.

25. However, inspection of offices for the Media Monitoring Unit in Kinshasa and a review of a sample of 20 media monitoring reports issued during the audit period indicated that the Media Monitoring Unit did not monitor news and events on local television and radio stations which were the main information media relied on by the local population. The Mission had: provided the Media Monitoring Unit with television sets to enable the Unit to monitor news on local and international television stations, but these were not operational; and not provided radio sets to the Unit. This was because the Mission had not prioritized monitoring of the local television and radio stations. As a result, there was a risk that the Mission may not adequately monitor information listened to by the local population through local television and radio stations.

(2) MONUSCO should assess the need to: (a) include local television and radio stations in its media monitoring activities; and (b) provide functional radios and television sets to its Media Monitoring Unit to monitor the news and information broadcast to the local population.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 2 and stated that it: would include local television and radio stations in its media monitoring activities; and had put in a request for a television set and ordered six radio receivers. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has included local radio and television stations in its media monitoring activities.

MONUSCO had established a radio station but needed to prepare an exit/sustainability strategy

26. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires MONUSCO to: include a provision in the Status of Force Agreement on the right of the Mission to establish a radio station; produce programmes in local languages; plan the objectives and duration of the radio station; and factor an exit or sustainability plan in the planning and operations of the station.

27. MONUSCO established Radio Okapi to disseminate information relating to its mandate and enlighten the local population on the role of the Mission. MONUSCO implemented the following measures to ensure a wide reach of the radio station to listeners inside and outside the country:

- Radio Okapi produced and broadcast programmes from Kinshasa and four other regional stations in Goma, Bukavu, Bunia and Beni. The programmes comprised news, education and entertainment segments and were presented in five national languages to reach the largest audience possible;
- MONUSCO operated 37 transmitters that enabled Radio Okapi to provide wide coverage in the country to 76 main towns and surrounding areas within a radius ranging from 30 to 150 kilometres. Broadcasts were also available through live stream on the Internet. Statistics prepared by the SCPID indicated that an average of 69,000 listeners from 16 countries tuned in to the online portal of Radio Okapi monthly;
- Radio Okapi created awareness of the Mission's activities by: (a) providing live broadcasts and reruns of the weekly press conferences convened by the Spokesperson; (b) broadcasting a weekly programme that highlighted significant activities conducted by the Mission and other United Nations entities; and (c) broadcasting programmes to enlighten the local population when the Mission's mandates were revised or renewed;
- In 2016, the SCPID reviewed Radio Okapi programmes to include interactive sessions that provide for more participation by the local population through call-in sessions and interviews with various opinion leaders from the government and civil society; and
- MONUSCO staffed Radio Okapi with staff with the ability to produce and broadcast programmes in five national languages.

28. OIOS further noted that MONUSCO had initiated actions to consider options on an exit strategy/sustainability plan for Radio Okapi. However, significant progress was not achieved to finalize the plan and align it to the Mission's exit strategy. This resulted because the Mission had not defined in its communication strategy the duration of the radio station and identified a target date to hand over management of the radio station to an entity that would ensure its continued operations. As a result, there remained a risk that Radio Okapi, which is a very successful radio station, might not be sustainable beyond the life of the Mission.

(3) MONUSCO should define in its communication strategy the expected duration of its management of Radio Okapi's operations and identify a target exit date and suitable entity to take over to enable the Mission to finalize an exit strategy/sustainability plan.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 3 and stated that it would have a draft sustainability plan by February 2018 and a final exit plan by June 2018. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of the final exit strategy/sustainability plan for Radio Okapi.

MONUSCO implemented adequate mechanisms to conduct outreach activities

29. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires MONUSCO to conduct outreach activities and campaigns to build trust and local support for the mandate and peace process, and promote a culture of sustainable peace. Outreach activities include civil society engagement, panel discussions, workshops, sporting events, concerts, exhibitions, community dialogue and town hall meetings. The Policy also requires MONUSCO to conduct outreach to troop-/police-contributing countries, including producing content such as feature stories, videos and photos.

30. MONUSCO established an Outreach Unit to plan and manage public information outreach activities. The Unit conducted various outreach activities in conjunction with field offices, including: organizing events to commemorate international days (including peacekeepers, United Nations, Press Freedom, Peace Day, Women's Day); mobilizing the local population as part of information and awareness campaigns; sponsoring sporting events; conducting awareness raising sessions and town hall meetings to enlighten local populations on the Mission's mandate; and using quick impact projects to train local journalists on how to cover the Mission's events and use radio equipment. MONUSCO established a press centre in Goma for use by accredited journalists from media organizations to enable them to readily interact with the Mission's public information officers. MONUSCO also produced and distributed various products including videos, publications and photos to troop-/police-contributing countries to inform Member States of their contribution in implementing the Mission's mandate.

31. OIOS concluded that MONUSCO had established adequate procedures to conduct outreach activities and campaigns with the local population and troop-/police-contributing countries.

MONUSCO effectively used printed materials to disseminate public information

32. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires MONUSCO to: use printed materials as part of the public information strategy to communicate the United Nations message directly to the local population, local authorities and decision-makers, and convey concrete evidence of the United Nations presence; provide useful information to local and international media; and provide funds for their production.

33. The Mission produced and published a monthly magazine, "Echos de la MONUSCO". To ensure wide circulation of the magazine, the SCPID distributed electronic and print copies of each production to staff, United Nations entities in the country, local and international media, diplomatic missions, and various Government departments. Digital copies were also posted on the Mission's intranet and Internet sites and social media platforms. The SCPID was also dispatching copies of publications to field public information offices for subsequent distribution to audiences in the provinces. For instance, in March 2017, the Publications Unit in Kinshasa dispatched 5,200 copies of the magazines to 11 field offices. MONUSCO also allocated funds in its 2015/16 and 2016/17 budgets to publish 25,000 copies of the magazine per month. In addition, the SCPID prepared and printed posters to create awareness of events organized by the United Nations. MONUSCO outsourced the printing of the magazine and assigned staff to the printer to provide quality assurance on the printing process.

34. OIOS concluded that MONUSCO had implemented adequate controls to disseminate public information through printed materials to communicate the United Nations messages directly to the local population, local authorities, decision-makers, and local and international media.

Need to monitor the broadcast of MONUSCO videos and establish contracts with television stations

35. The United Nations Procurement Manual requires MONUSCO to evaluate vendors on quality, delivery, timeliness and other performance indicators regarding contracted services. Contracts between MONUSCO and partner television stations for the broadcast of weekly video programmes require the Multimedia Unit to: (a) monitor the broadcasting of programmes by the television stations; (b) consider renewing the contracts after their expiry for an additional period of six months; and (c) evaluate quarterly the performance of partner television stations.

36. A review of contracts with television stations, broadcasting schedules and payments to television stations indicated that:

- Although the Multimedia Unit stated that its staff monitored from their residences the broadcast of video programmes by partner television stations in Kinshasa, Goma and Bukavu, the staff did not document the outcome of their monitoring to confirm if the broadcasts were in line with contractual arrangements. This resulted because MONUSCO had not established a procedure for reporting results of the monitoring of video broadcasts, increasing the risk that the Mission would certify payments to partner television stations for services that were not satisfactorily provided;
- The television broadcasting schedules and contracts with television stations showed that the majority of broadcasts were made in locations where the Mission had significant presence and operations, including Kinshasa, Goma and Bukavu. However, despite increased operations and presence in Beni and Kananga Provinces over the last two years in response to its mandate, the Mission had not engaged television stations in these locations to broadcast its video programmes. This was because the Mission had not updated its communication strategy and work plans to include the increased need for public information in the additional locations outlined in its mandate, impacting on the effectiveness of its public information programme to create awareness of its operations among the local population in the two locations;
- The Mission's contracts with 15 television stations to broadcast its video programmes had expired on 30 June 2016. However, without renewal, the Mission continued to use them to broadcast its video programmes and pay them for their services without any contractual agreement. Contracts were not renewed because there was no system in place to regularly monitor the contractual arrangements with television stations; and
- As no process had been established, MONUSCO did not evaluate the performance of the television stations, which was required for extending the contracts, nor did it conduct assessments/surveys to ascertain the effectiveness of its video programmes among the local population and the popularity of these programmes based on the number of viewers for each partner television station. As a result, the Mission did not have adequate information to assist in making informed decisions on the continued broadcast of its video programmes.

(4) MONUSCO, for services contracted to television stations, should: (a) document its monitoring of programmes to ensure contractual terms are met; (b) increase its coverage of video programmes to Beni and Kananga provinces; (c) regularly monitor contracts to ensure they are valid; (d) evaluate quarterly the contractors' performance and use the results to improve services provided; and (e) evaluate the impact of its video programmes to determine their effectiveness.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 4 and stated that it had put in place a new monitoring system that would allow it to regularly monitor the broadcasting of its programmes. It also stated that for Beni, it would focus more on Radio Okapi programmes using local languages and for Kananga, it had identified a television station that would start broadcasting its programmes in December 2017. It further stated that it would monitor the validity of its contracts and evaluate contractors' performance to improve services provided, as well as evaluate the impact of its video programmes. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has: (a) documented its monitoring of the broadcasting of its video programmes by contracted television stations; (b) extended the broadcast of its video programmes in Beni and Kananga; (c) maintained valid contracts with all partner television stations; and (d) evaluated quarterly the performance of partner television stations and the impact of its video programmes.

C. Clearance and archiving of public information outputs

MONUSCO had adequate controls for clearance and release of public information

37. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires the Director to establish procedures to clear information for public release and define types of information that may be cleared at each level. MONUSCO memorandum on rules relating to the interaction of Mission personnel with the media and sharing of sensitive information with external sources requires only authorized senior Mission officials to give interviews or interact with the media on behalf of the Mission; and prohibits staff from sharing internal documents or emails with external parties.

38. MONUSCO established procedures to clear all public information outputs prior to release. For instance: (a) an editorial committee reviewed drafts of the monthly magazine prior to approval by the Director for publication; (b) the Spokesperson prepared press briefings and releases, and had them approved by both the Director and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General prior to their issue; (c) the Radio Okapi editorial board, comprising editors and sub-editors, reviewed all news collected for accuracy and to ensure that they met the Mission's editorial standards, and the Chief, Radio Okapi and the Director approved the resultant news programmes prior to broadcasting; and (d) the Multimedia Unit had a selection committee to review and approve the photo of the day, and an editorial board to review video programmes prior to their distribution to partner television stations for broadcast. OIOS attended three press conferences and reviewed a number of transcripts for press conferences that confirmed only authorized Mission officials addressed the media.

39. OIOS concluded that MONUSCO had implemented adequate controls: over the clearance of public information materials prior to their dissemination to the public; and to ensure that only authorized officials interacted with the media on behalf of the Mission.

Need to develop archiving procedures for field offices

40. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires MONUSCO to archive public information material throughout the life of the Mission. The Policy recommends hard copies and electronic files of records to be transferred for archiving as follows: (a) press materials including press releases, press transcripts, printed public information products, radio and television programme scripts and other written materials to the Archives and Records Management Section; (b) audios, videos and photographs to the DPI Audio-Visual Library; and (c) web content to the DFS web platform.

41. A review of the archiving procedures and verification of archives for public information materials indicated that: Radio Okapi maintained a comprehensive backup of all its radio productions; the Mission provided its web content to the DFS web platform; and the Multimedia Unit had archives of its video programmes and photographs and regularly forwarded digital copies of videos and photographs to DPI. However, the Spokesperson's Office and Publications Unit did not maintain a centralized archiving system for their products. Individual staff instead maintained documents in their computers. The public information office in Goma did not have a system in place to systematically archive public information materials. Staff members maintained documents in their personal computers, with multimedia staff using external backup devices to maintain copies of multimedia files.

42. In August 2017, the Records Management Unit, which oversees the retention of records in the Mission, trained six staff of the SCPID in Kinshasa on records management and provided each SCPID Unit with scanners to record digital copies of documents for archiving. However, the Mission did not train staff in the public information office in Goma and field offices and provide them with equipment to facilitate archiving of information as it had not identified public information officers in its field offices who would be responsible for archiving. As a result, the Mission may not have a complete repository of all its public information outputs for future reference.

(5) MONUSCO should: (a) assign archiving responsibilities to public information officers in field offices and train them on archiving and records management; and (b) provide field offices with scanners to capture public information outputs for archiving.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 5 and stated that it: would assign archiving responsibilities to public information officers in field offices; had requested the Mission Records Management Unit to provide eight scanners to field public information offices; and would train additional public information officers on archiving and records management. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has: trained public information officers in all field offices on archiving and records management; and provided scanners to all field public information offices.

D. Media relations and capacity building

Need to enhance the media accreditation process

43. The DPKO/DFS Policy and Guidance for public information in the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations requires MONUSCO to conduct media accreditation to ensure that only bona fide media organizations attend its press briefings and cover Mission events. The Policy requires media representatives seeking accreditation to present: credentials that establish their professional legitimacy, including, national identification card or valid passport; signed letter of introduction and assignment from the bona fide media organization that employs or sponsors them; and a Mission accreditation application form.

44. A review of documentation and the attendance lists for a weekly press conference of 27 September 2017 attended by 70 journalists in Kinshasa (47) and Goma (23) indicated that:

- All journalists in Kinshasa were accredited. These journalists had submitted accreditation application forms obtained from the Media Relations Unit which included code of conduct, letters of introduction from their media organizations and identification documents. The Spokesperson reviewed all applications and authorized the Security Section to issue press identification cards to the authorized applicants to enable them to gain access to MONUSCO facilities to cover events.

- None of the journalists in Goma were accredited. The public information office in Goma, which was responsible for accrediting journalists in the eastern part of the country, did not obtain required documentation from journalists such as application forms, letters of introduction from their media organizations and identification documents. This resulted because MONUSCO had not prepared procedures for the accreditation of journalists and trained its staff on how to conduct the process. Coverage by unauthorized journalists of the Mission's press conferences and other events may result in inaccurate reporting that may adversely affect the reputation of the United Nations.

(6) MONUSCO should prepare procedures for the accreditation of journalists and train all public information officers involved in the accreditation process.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 6 and stated that it: had initiated a process to harmonize the accreditation of journalists; and would organize training for all public information officers involved in the accreditation process. Recommendation 6 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has harmonized the accreditation of journalists and trained all public information officers involved in the accreditation process.

Need to develop training programmes for public information officers

45. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires MONUSCO to: recruit national staff who understand and communicate effectively with local audiences; support the development of a free and independent host country media by arranging training for local journalists; ensure that national staff develop their skills for employment after United Nations service; and provide guidance and training to the MPIOs and PPIOs to ensure that they are fully briefed on the Mission's communication strategy and understand their role in its implementation.

46. Radio Okapi staff attended seven training courses on radio journalism, and 16 staff in Kinshasa assigned to the Director's Office, Multimedia Unit, Publications Unit and Spokesperson's Office completed various mandatory training required to be undertaken by all United Nations staff. These courses were however not directly targeted at building capacities of staff in public information related activities. The SCPID also conducted one training session for MPIOs and PPIOs during the period. OIOS considered this inadequate due to the frequent rotation of military and police officers. This resulted because the SCPID neither included staff training as an activity in its annual work plans for 2015/16 and 2016/17 nor conducted a training needs assessment.

47. Considering the dynamic environment of media and communications, there was a risk that public information officers were not up-to-date on changes in their profession, which could impact their effectiveness in communicating important messages. Additionally, with the frequent rotation of MPIOs and PPIOs, important messages may not be properly communicated as responsible officers may not be fully aware of the Mission's communication strategy and codes on sharing of public information.

(7) MONUSCO should: (a) include training activities for public information officers in its annual work plans for the public information programme; and (b) conduct a training needs assessment for public information officers.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 7 and stated that it would conduct a training needs assessment and include training activities in the public information programme annual work plan for 2018/19. Recommendation 7 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has completed a training needs assessment for public information officers and included the training programmes identified in its annual work plans.

E. Impact assessment

Need to evaluate impact of the public information programme

48. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on strategic communications and public information requires MONUSCO to: regularly evaluate both qualitatively and quantitatively the impact of its communications; establish evaluation procedures to ensure that communications objectives are achieved; use results of evaluations and audience engagement to review and enhance its programmes and products; and include evaluation costs in the budget for public information programme. The MONUSCO communication strategy requires the Mission's communication activities to be evaluated quarterly. The DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy and Guidance for public information in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations requires MONUSCO to measure the impact of Radio Okapi through surveys among target audiences conducted by public information component personnel or by a specialized firm.

49. MONUSCO had developed mechanisms to internally monitor the performance and impact of some of its public information products, including: documentation of success stories based on feedback received from listeners who had been positively impacted by Radio Okapi programmes; review and analysis of feedback received from followers of its social media platforms on articles posted; and monthly analysis of the statistics of visits to its web platforms including website, YouTube videos and online streaming of Radio Okapi.

50. However, MONUSCO did not qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate the impact of its public information programme. This was because the Mission had not: defined the evaluation methodology to be used; and allocated financial resources to evaluate public information activities. As a result, the Mission could not demonstrate how effective the overall public information programme was in supporting the implementation of the mandate.

(8) MONUSCO should: (a) define various methodologies to be used in evaluating the impact of its public information activities; and (b) allocate financial resources to evaluate the public information programme.

MONUSCO accepted recommendation 8 and stated that it: would put in place a mechanism to evaluate public information activities; and had established a contract with a company to conduct a survey on the perception of the SCPID programmes. It further stated that the survey would be conducted in early 2018 and repeated every two to three years. Recommendation 8 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has evaluated its public information programme.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

51. 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 public information 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 regularly review and update its communication strategy to ensure that: (a) it is aligned with the Mission's mandate; (b) the resources required to attain the communication objectives and manage the communication platforms are included; and (c) it is periodically evaluated for effectiveness. | Important | O | Receipt of an updated communication strategy. | 30 June 2018 |
| 2 | MONUSCO should assess the need to: (a) include local television and radio stations in its media monitoring activities; and (b) provide functional radios and television sets to its Media Monitoring Unit to monitor the news and information broadcast to the local population. | Important | O | Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has included local radio and television stations in its media monitoring activities. | 31 March 2018 |
| 3 | MONUSCO should define in its communication strategy the expected duration of its management of Radio Okapi's operations and identify a target exit date and suitable entity to take over to enable the Mission to finalize an exit strategy/sustainability plan. | Important | O | Receipt of the final exit strategy/sustainability plan for Radio Okapi. | 30 September 2018 |
| 4 | MONUSCO, for services contracted to television stations, should: (a) document its monitoring of programmes to ensure contractual terms are met; (b) increase its coverage of video programmes to Beni and Kananga provinces; (c) regularly monitor contracts to ensure they are valid; (d) evaluate quarterly the contractors' performance and use the | Important | O | Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has: (a) documented its monitoring of the broadcasting of its video programmes by contracted television stations; (b) extended the broadcast of its video programmes in Beni and Kananga; (c) maintained valid contracts with all partner television stations; and (d) evaluated quarterly the performance of | 31 March 2018 |

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.

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Audit of the public information programme in the
United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

| Rec. no. | Recommendation | Critical/ Important ² | C/ O ³ | Actions needed to close recommendation | Implementation date ⁴ |
|----------|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| | results to improve services provided; and (e) evaluate the impact of its video programmes to determine their effectiveness. | | | partner television stations and the impact of its video programmes. | |
| 5 | MONUSCO should: (a) assign archiving responsibilities to public information officers in field offices and train them on archiving and records management; and (b) provide field offices with scanners to capture public information outputs for archiving. | Important | O | Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has: trained public information officers in all field offices on archiving and records management; and provided scanners to all field public information offices. | 31 March 2018 |
| 6 | MONUSCO should prepare procedures for the accreditation of journalists and train all public information officers involved in the accreditation process. | Important | O | Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has harmonized accreditation of journalists and trained all public information officers involved in the accreditation process. | 30 June 2018 |
| 7 | MONUSCO should: (a) include training activities for public information officers in its annual work plans for the public information programme; and (b) conduct a training needs assessment for public information officers. | Important | O | Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has completed a training needs assessment for public information officers and included the training programmes identified in its annual work plans. | 30 June 2018 |
| 8 | MONUSCO should: (a) define various methodologies to be used in evaluating the impact of its public information activities; and (b) allocate financial resources to evaluate the public information programme. | Important | O | Receipt of evidence that MONUSCO has evaluated its public information programme. | 30 June 2018 |

APPENDIX I

Management Response



MONUSCO

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

United Nations Organisation Stabilization
Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo

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CONSOLIDATE PEACE

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

06 December 2017
Ref. ODMS/17/OM/05012

To: Mr. Arnold Valdez, Officer-in-Charge
Peacekeeping Audit Services
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

From: Paul Buades
Acting Director of Mission Support
MONUSCO

Subject: Management Response to Draft Audit Report on audit of public information programme in MONUSCO (Assignment No. AP2017/620/07)

1. Thank you for your interoffice memorandum reference IAD: 17-33 dated 30 November 2017, requesting the Mission to provide comments on the recommendation in the draft audit report on public information programme in MONUSCO.
2. Attached please find Appendix I - Management Response, for your consideration. Supporting documents will be provided to the Resident Audit Team.

Best regards.

Cc Mr. Maman Sambo Sidikou, Special Representative of the Secretary-General
Ms. Nancee Bright, Mission Chief of Staff, MONUSCO
Mr. Guy Griffin, Deputy Mission Chief of Staff, MONUSCO
Mr. Charles Bambara, Director Strategic Communications and Public Information
Division, MONUSCO
Ms. Kerry Zillner, Audit Focal Point, MONUSCO
Mr. Daniel Maier, Officer-in-Charge, Strategic Planning Cell, MONUSCO
Mr. James Okwakol, Chief Resident Auditor, MONUSCO, Internal Audit Division, OIOS
Ms. Cynthia Avena-Castillo, Professional Practices Section, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Attachment: Appendix I - Management Response

Peace it!

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Management Response

**Audit of the public information 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 regularly review and update its communication strategy to ensure that: (a) it is aligned with the Mission's mandate; (b) the resources required to attain the communication objectives and manage the communication platforms are included; and (c) it is periodically evaluated for effectiveness. | Important | Yes | Coordinator Strategic Communications- Public Information Division | 30 June 2018 | MONUSCO concurs with the recommendation and will review and update its communication strategy. This is planned to be conducted in March, July, October and onwards. |
| 2 | MONUSCO should assess the need to: (a) include local television and radio stations in its media monitoring activities; and (b) provide functional radios and television sets to its Media Monitoring Unit to monitor the news and information broadcast to the local population. | Important | Yes | Special Assistant Strategic Communications- Public Information Division | 31 March 2018 | MONUSCO concurs with the recommendation and will include local television and radio stations in its media monitoring activities. A request has been sent to the Director of Mission Support for the provision of a Television set. In addition, 6 radio receivers have been ordered to be provided to the Media Monitoring Unit for monitoring and broadcasting purposes. |
| 3 | MONUSCO should define in its communication strategy the expected duration of its management of Radio Okapi's operations and identify a target exit date and suitable entity to take over to enable the Mission to finalize an exit strategy/sustainability plan. | Important | Yes | Coordinator Strategic Communications- Public Information Division | 30 September 2018 | MONUSCO concurs with the recommendation. Based on the existing options, Radio Okapi Chief was tasked to work on a sustainability plan and share a first draft in 3 months (by the end of February 2018) to be presented at the |

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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 public information 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 |
|----------|--|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | | | | | Mission Leadership Team meeting. Final radio okapi exit plan is expected in June 2018. |
| 4 | MONUSCO, for services contracted to television stations, should: (a) document its monitoring of programmes to ensure contractual terms are met; (b) increase its coverage of programmes to Beni and Kananga provinces; (c) regularly monitor contracts to ensure they are valid; (d) evaluate quarterly the contractors' performance and use the results to improve services provided; and (e) evaluate the impact of its video programmes to determine their effectiveness. | Important | Yes | Chief of Multimedia | 31 March 2018 | MONUSCO concurs with the recommendation. The new system of monitoring in place will allow the Mission to follow up regularly the broadcasting of the programmes and ensure contractual terms are met. However, after a first assessment of the media in Beni region, it was noted that there is no Television channel in Beni. We have Radio Television Nationale Congolaise, the national channel, but since we are already using them in Kinshasa it is no more useful to target them again, it will be a duplication. We will focus more our attention on radio Okapi programmes using local language in the two provinces. For Kananga, we have identified the channel "Kasai Horizon" and they will start broadcasting our programmes in December 2017. MONUSCO will monitor the validity of its contracts and evaluate their performance to improve services provided, as well as evaluate the impact of its video programmes. |
| 5 | MONUSCO should: (a) assign archiving responsibilities to public information | Important | Yes | Coordinator | 31 March 2018 | MONUSCO concurs with the recommendation. Archiving |

Management Response

**Audit of the public information 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 |
|----------|---|---|-----------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| | officers in field offices and train them on archiving and records management; and (b) provide field offices with scanners to capture public information outputs for archiving. | | | Strategic Communications- Public Information Division | | responsibilities will be assigned to public information officers in field offices. A request was made to the Mission Records Management Unit to provide 8 scanners for Public Information Officers in field offices. It is expected that by December 31, 2017 all scanners should reach the provinces. Trainings on archiving and records management will be provided to Public Information Officers and be completed by March 2018. |
| 6 | MONUSCO should prepare procedures for the accreditation of journalists and train all public information officers involved in the accreditation process. | Important | Yes | Spokesperson Public Information Division | 30 June 2018 | MONUSCO concurs with the recommendation. A harmonization process has been initiated to ensure the accreditation of journalist and will be in place by January 2018. Training will also be organized for all public information officers involved in the accreditation process. |
| 7 | MONUSCO should: (a) include training activities for public information officers in its annual work plans for the public information programme; and (b) conduct a training needs assessment for public information officers. | Important | Yes | Coordinator Strategic Communications- Public Information Division | 30 June 2018 | MONUSCO concurs with the recommendation. MONUSCO will conduct a training needs assessment and include training activities in the annual work plan for the public information programme 2018/2019. |
| 8 | MONUSCO should: (a) define various methodologies to be used in evaluating the impact of its public information activities; and (b) allocate financial | Important | Yes | Special Assistant Strategic Communications- Public | 30 June 2018 | MONUSCO concurs with the recommendation. A proper mechanism will be put in place to ensure the evaluation of public information activities. Contacts have |

Management Response

**Audit of the public information 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 |
|----------|---|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| | resources to evaluate the public information programme. | | | Information Division | | already been established with a Survey Company (TARGET) to conduct a wide survey on the perception of the Strategic Communication and Public Information Division's programmes. The survey will be conducted in early 2018 and repeated every 2-3 years. |