



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2017/117

Audit of the public information programme in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

The Mission needed to evaluate the effectiveness of its public information programme, fill the long outstanding vacant post of the Chief of Office, develop a social media strategy and enhance maintenance of radio assets

13 November 2017
Assignment No. AP2017/633/09

Audit of the public information programme in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the public information programme in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes over the public information programme in UNMISS. The audit covered the period from January 2014 to April 2017 and included: public information governance, performance management and monitoring, release and disclosure of public information, coordination with other sections, media monitoring activities, outreach programmes, social media and budgeting.

The Mission had initiated steps to strengthen its strategic communications capacity by restructuring the Communications and Public Information Office (CPIO) and revising its public information strategy. However, UNMISS needed to implement measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the public information programme, develop a social media strategy, analyse trends from media monitoring and enhance maintenance of radio assets.

OIOS made 10 recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, UNMISS needed to:

- Ensure that its public information strategy contains essential elements including key performance indicators and mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of its communication and public information programme;
- Fill the long outstanding vacant post of Chief CPIO;
- Ensure the CPIO develops its annual work plans covering all units;
- Increase its capacity for live programming during evening peak hours and implement procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of radio programmes in reaching their intended audience;
- Provide resources to facilitate preventive maintenance at radio transmission sites;
- Develop and implement a social media strategy as part of its communication strategy to increase audience engagement and facilitate disseminating information rapidly and widely;
- Adequately archive multimedia and other important public information;
- Maintain documentary evidence of clearance of public information outputs;
- Establish a mechanism for analyzing developments and trends critical to the implementation of the Mission's mandate from its media monitoring; and
- Provide job-specific induction and briefing for new staff and ongoing training for the CPIO staff.

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

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Audit of the public information programme 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 the public information programme in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS).
2. The Communications and Public Information Office (CPIO) in UNMISS is governed by the Policy and Guidance for Public Information in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, issued by the Department of Public Information (DPI) in coordination with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in July 2006 and amended in 2016, and UNMISS CPIO standard operating procedures issued in November 2016.
3. The CPIO is responsible for developing and delivering the Mission's communications strategy aimed at enhancing the ability of the Mission to carry out its mandate successfully. The Section, which has its Headquarters in Juba, has established nine regional offices. The CPIO comprises five units: the Spokesperson, Media Relations, Radio Miraya, Outreach and Advocacy and Multimedia composed of web-based publications, video and photography.
4. The CPIO has 107 staff and at the time of the audit was headed by the UNMISS Head of Radio at the P-5 level, who concurrently acted as the Officer-in-Charge and reported directly to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG). The CPIO budgets for financial years 2015/16 and 2016/17 were \$1.6 million and \$1.2 million, respectively.
5. Comments provided by UNMISS are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and control processes over the public information programme in UNMISS.
7. This audit was included in the 2017 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the high governance and operational risks related to the management of communication and public information in UNMISS.
8. OIOS conducted this audit from May to July 2017. The audit covered the period from January 2014 to April 2017. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risks areas in the public information programme, which included: public information governance, performance management and monitoring, release and disclosure of public information, coordination with other sections, media monitoring activities, outreach programmes, social media and budgeting.
9. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews of key personnel, (b) reviews of relevant documentation, (c) analytical reviews of data, (d) judgmental sample testing of various CPIO reports and expenditures, and (d) field visits of CPIO offices located in Juba, Malakal, Bentiu and Bor.
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 public information strategy

Need to enhance the Mission's public information strategy

11. The Department of Public Information Policy and Guidance for Public Information in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (DPI/DPKO Operational Policy) requires the Chief CPIO, in close consultation with the Head of Mission, to develop and implement the Mission's public information strategy. The strategy should outline how the achievement of the Mission's communications goals in support of the Mission's objectives will be evaluated. The DPI/DPKO Operational Policy also requires the Chief CPIO to implement evaluation procedures to assess the impact of the CPIO programme; ensure communications objectives are met in the most efficient manner; and to review and update the strategy throughout the life cycle of the Mission.

12. UNMISS had developed an interim public information strategy in October 2015, revised it after the July 2016 crisis in Juba consistent with the new Mission mandate of 12 August 2016 and further revised the strategy in July 2017. A review of the interim and revised strategies indicated that these were aligned with the relevant UNMISS mandates, and clearly articulated the communications goals. However, the UNMISS CPIO strategies of 2015 and 2016 did not provide mechanisms for assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of the CPIO programme. While the revised CPIO strategy of July 2017 provided for assessment of the effectiveness of the new CPIO structure and capability-building, it did not specify the frequency of evaluations nor key performance indicators for evaluating the quantity and quality of internal and external coverage of CPIO activities. Therefore, UNMISS had not evaluated its communication and public information programme to assess its performance and whether established objectives were achieved.

13. CPIO advised that its prior efforts to undertake evaluation of its programmes failed mainly because there were no suitable service providers at the time. However, in 2017, the Section initiated another procurement process for an evaluator, which was at the technical evaluation stage as at August 2017. The continuing vacancy in the Chief CPIO position and the intervening security crisis of July 2016 also contributed to the shortcomings in the CPIO strategy.

(1) UNMISS should take action to ensure that its public information strategy contains essential elements including key performance indicators and mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of its communication and public information programme.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 1 and stated that the bidding process to conduct a perception survey was ongoing and that the Media Relations Team was in the process of developing media tracking and analysis tools. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of evidence that UNMISS has conducted perception survey and developed media tracking, analysis tools and monitoring mechanisms.

UNMISS had initiated steps to strengthen its strategic communications capacity

14. United Nations Security Council resolution 2327 of 12 August 2016 required UNMISS to increase its communication and information response, including strengthening UNMISS strategic communications capacity to undertake messaging on the impartial nature of UNMISS activities, including those of its Regional Protection Force.

15. Following the appointment of the new SRSG in January 2017, the Mission initiated actions to improve its image, reinvigorate its relationship with national, regional and international audiences, and to reinforce its impartial partnership role in working with the people of South Sudan to protect civilians and build durable peace. As of 7 July 2017, some of the actions taken by the Mission included formulation of a new vision, changing the CPIO structure and strategy, with the CPIO reporting to the Office of the SRSG and outlining the Mission communication strategy with respect to the deployment of the Regional Protection Force to Juba. The changes were expected to enhance the Mission's communication to an internal audience within South Sudan as well as to those externally, including the media and international stakeholders.

16. As the Mission was taking proactive steps to strengthen its strategic communications capacity to implement requirements of United Nations Security Council resolution 2327, OIOS did not make a recommendation at this time.

Need to fill the Chief CPIO post

17. The DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requires the Chief CPIO to formulate the Mission's public information strategy and supervise its implementation. The Chief CPIO oversees the development, production and dissemination of public information materials and the Mission's website, and the monitoring of local and international media and ensures that information products reach their target audiences and reflect Mission priorities.

18. The position of Chief CPIO, at the D-1 level, had remained vacant since October 2014 due to challenges in the recruitment process for the post. Officers-in-Charge (OICs) had intermittently headed the CPIO (two Spokespersons, Chief Radio Miraya and two external consultants), with each one pursuing different priorities and initiatives that were ultimately not sustained. For instance, one OIC implemented the practice of tracking the Mission's response to trends identified through analysis of media reports concerning the Mission but this was abandoned after only three months.

19. The vacancy in the position of the Chief CPIO and changes in OIC resulted in the shortcomings identified in the Mission's CPIO strategy.

(2) UNMISS should fill the position of the Chief of Communications and Public Information Office.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 2 and stated that in light of the changes introduced in the CPIO in July 2017 to align its objectives with the mandate, the SRSG was further reviewing the roster to consider applicants. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence that the Chief CPIO post has been filled.

Need to develop and implement work plans

20. The DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requires the Chief CPIO to develop a CPIO component work plan that included all public information activities with their cost estimates in the component work plan.

21. The CPIO had a work plan prepared by a consultant in its interim public information strategy for 2015/16. In addition, the CPIO had prepared work plans for its Outreach Unit for the year 2016/17 but had not prepared a work plan covering the other units for 2016/17. Review of the 2015/16 work plan and budget submissions for the fiscal year indicated that the work plan included CPIO goals and objectives, key activities and timelines.

22. Lack of effective coordination of CPIO activities across its units and lack of continuity in the leadership of CPIO resulted in failure to have a work plan for 2016/17. This could result in CPIO and its field offices failing to provide adequate coverage of significant activities of other components.

(3) UNMISS should ensure the Communications and Public Information Office develops its annual work plans covering all units.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the annual work plan was being developed. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of a copy of the annual CPIO work plan covering all units.

B. Public information and communication channels

Need to evaluate the effectiveness of radio programmes

23. The UNMISS CPIO standard operating procedures require the CPIO to identify and prioritize the primary target groups for communication in accordance with the following criteria: the level of direct impact the group has on the work and objective of the Mission; the ability of the group to influence the Mission's achievements and image; and the extent to which the perceptions or behavior of the group need to change to allow effective implementation of and support for the mandate of the Mission.

24. The airing of radio programmes considered the results of a 2012 quantitative survey, which was undertaken by an external service provider to measure listener awareness, audience figures and perceptions of Radio Miraya. The station aired programmes relating to the Mission's substantive programmes in the morning and repeated them in the evening, in line with the results of the 2012 survey, which indicated that these were peak times for radio listeners in South Sudan. An examination of the radio programme schedule (effective December 2016) indicated that the station only aired recorded programmes during peak evening times and thus was unable to have live engagement with the wide audience that listen to the radio during the evening peak hours of 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The Mission had not undertaken a recent survey to measure changes in listener awareness, audience figures and perceptions of Radio Miraya.

25. The above resulted because Mission efforts to undertake surveys were unsuccessful in 2014/15 and 2015/16 due to challenges in securing the services of appropriate service providers. In addition, national staff could not host programmes after the Mission's curfew time of 7 p.m.

26. Consequently, UNMISS missed the opportunity to assess the impact of its radio programming in reaching primary target groups and generating support and understanding of the work of the Mission.

(4) UNMISS should take measures to increase its capacity for live programming during evening peak hours and implement procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of radio programmes in reaching their intended audience.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 4 and stated discussions with the Special Planning Unit and Human Resources Section on the redeployment of five Language Assistants were ongoing. The Mission also advised that the bidding process to obtain external services for a perception survey was ongoing. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence of measures taken by the Office to increase its capacity for live programming during evening peak hours and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

Need to resolve dispute over radio equipment with the Government of the Republic of South Sudan

27. The status of forces agreement (SOFA) between the United Nations and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GOSS) concerning UNMISS provides that the Mission shall enjoy the right to unrestricted communication by radio, as well as the right for establishing the necessary facilities for maintaining such communication. In addition, the agreement requires the Government to provide, at no cost, the required facilities for the Mission to operate, as well as unimpeded access to the Mission's premises and facilities.

28. The GOSS authorities, due to a contractual dispute with the Mission relating to the validity of a contract for use of space at the premises of the South Sudan Television (SSTV), had since 2014 restricted UNMISS from retrieving some of its radio broadcasting equipment. The equipment comprised a 5KW generator, transmitter and radio transmission aerial with an estimated replacement cost of \$54,000, which has now exceeded its useful life. Prior to the founding of the GOSS and UNMIS, the Mission (then, the United Nations Mission in Sudan) had located the equipment at the station to reach a wider audience enabled by a taller communication mast owned by the SSTV.

29. The above resulted because the GOSS had demanded that the Mission pay rental of \$1,500 (unclear whether one off or monthly) for the space occupied by its equipment at the station, retroactively from the establishment of UNMISS in 2011. The Mission declined this request in line with the provisions in the SOFA, which required the GOSS to provide required facilities at no cost. The Mission had not revisited the matter since October 2014 when its previous efforts to retrieve the equipment were unsuccessful. Consequently, UNMISS has not been able to utilize its full array of equipment for radio programming, and has had to procure additional similar radio broadcasting equipment in the interim.

30. On discussion with the Mission, the CPIO advised that it would follow up again with GOSS, with the assistance of the Legal Affairs Unit and Office of the SRSG, to retrieve UNMISS property. If GOSS failed to cooperate, the Mission would have no other option but to write off the equipment. Based on the proposed action, OIOS did not make a recommendation at this time.

Need to enhance maintenance of radio assets

31. The DPKO/DPI Operational Policy requires the Mission to protect all radio assets through proper care, maintenance, control and reasonable safeguards to prevent loss, damage or theft of all equipment within the radio unit.

32. The Mission could not undertake regular preventive maintenance and inspection of radio transmission equipment because of limited maintenance capacity within the CPIO and insecurity concerns, which impeded the ability of the technicians to conduct preventive maintenance. Instead, the Mission carried out repair works when faults occurred or radio transmission equipment had failed. The maintenance schedule showed that as at August 2017, 15 of the total 23 radio transmitters sites (63 per cent) had not been inspected nor had maintenance been done for longer than 180 days. CPIO had not inspected nine sites (38 per cent) for longer than a year.

33. As a result, there is increased risk of radio transmission failure due to faulty transmitters, which may result in loss of its listeners through various sites for Radio Miraya. Furthermore, inadequate maintenance may result in increased spending to replace failing transmission equipment prior to reaching its operational useful life.

<p>(5) The Mission should provide resources to facilitate preventive maintenance at radio transmission sites.</p>
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UNMISS accepted recommendation 5 and stated that it had started issuing a monthly maintenance plan in November 2017. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence of implementation of the maintenance plan.

Need to develop and implement a social media strategy

34. The DPI/DPKO Operational policy requires the Multimedia Unit to establish and use appropriate digital and social media platforms for promoting content distribution, increasing audience engagement, disseminating information rapidly and widely, and to build support for the Mission's work with the locals, international community, media, diaspora communities and Member States. The UNMISS public information strategy calls for better utilization of social media sites as a point of distribution and feedback and requires the Mission to create an online flagship publication of UNMISS. The policy also calls for developing a content strategy that supports an advocacy-minded, campaign-driven approach and demonstrates the full range of activities of the Mission.

35. The Mission's social media presence included a website, Facebook, You Tube and Twitter official pages in English, as well as active links to Pinterest, Flickr, Tumblr, Vimeo and Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds. In November 2016, UNMISS identified weaknesses in its online platforms and activities to improve use of its social media platforms as part of the CPIO strategy. The Mission had however not outlined an implementation plan for the proposed activities nor provided the resources required for their implementation.

36. The above resulted because the Mission's communication strategy did not comprehensively articulate a social media strategy as the social media component was still in its infancy. This resulted in the lack of specific objectives for social media and establishment of relevant performance metrics. The Mission indicated that it initiated efforts to enhance social media in July 2016 but could not proceed due to the security crisis.

37. Consequently, UNMISS missed the opportunity to reach and engage with a potentially wider social media audience in its efforts to build support for the full range of Mission activities. For example, the Mission had 39,232 Facebook followers; however, social media posts received as few as 350 shares, comments or likes on some stories and none on others.

(6) UNMISS should develop and implement a social media strategy as part of its communication strategy to increase audience engagement and facilitate disseminating information rapidly and widely.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 6 and stated that it had developed a digital media strategy. Moreover, the website had been refreshed and technical work was underway to update all social media platforms. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence of implementation of the digital media strategy.

C. Controls over clearance and archiving of public information outputs

Need to implement procedures and train CPIO staff on archiving

38. The DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requires the CPIO to retain hard copies and electronic files of records, press releases and press transcripts, printed public information products, radio and television programme scripts and other written materials for archival purposes; to label stored material according to

the DPKO/Department of Field Support Information Management policy and to transfer this to the appropriate party according to the content type.

39. UNMISS properly stored radio programmes on an archiving network server specifically designated for this purpose at the Radio Unit and sent this to the Information Management Unit. However, the following exceptions were noted regarding archiving of video, photography and radio programmes:

- The contents of the archive folders created in the CPIO shared drive were substantially incomplete. Press briefings and statements were only available for February to April 2016; the Radio Unit documents had only two saved materials, i.e., for February 2013 and July 2015; media monitoring records were only stored for January 2015 to February 2016. Also, no hard copies and electronic files were transferred to the Archives and Records Management Section (now known as the Information Management Unit);
- Videos and photographs produced by the Video/Photo Unit were not archived and transferred to the DPI Audio-Visual Library, from the start of the Mission in July 2011 to July 2017. There was no library listing of videos/photos produced and stored on external hard drives, which were subject to the risk of crashing and therefore required creation of further backups; and
- There was no library listing of the audio content produced and neither was the archived radio programmes sent to the DPI Audio-Visual Library.

40. The above occurred mainly because the CPIO had not implemented the DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requirements on the archiving of public information materials and the lack of training on archiving for the CPIO staff. Hence, there was a risk of loss of institutional knowledge. In one instance, an external hard drive containing video content crashed and UNMISS had to enlist the services of an external company to recover the files. UNMISS indicated that the CPIO 2017 strategy included the requirements for archiving by implementing a total record information management (TRIM) system and had prioritized training of staff.

(7) UNMISS should implement the DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requirements for archiving information and train public information staff.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 7 and stated that the TRIM database was used for archiving information and that it had organized a training on the database for January 2018. Recommendation 7 remains open pending receipt of evidence of implementation of TRIM and training of staff to systematically archive public information materials.

Need to maintain evidence of clearance of public information outputs

41. The DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requires the Head of Mission to establish a straightforward mechanism for the timely approval of all press releases and other public information. The clearance procedures require designating CPIO officials who may clear information for public release; defining the type of information that may be cleared at each level; and informing all public information component staff of the clearance procedures. The Mission is also expected to maintain documentary evidence of the approval of all press releases and other public communications.

42. Public information outputs (press releases, statements and press lines) were cleared through the offices of Chief of Staff and the Deputy SRSG from the start of the Mission up to December 2016, and through the Office of the SRSG from January 2017. However, there was no documentary evidence for pre-

approval/clearance of public information outputs by the offices of the Chief of Staff, the Deputy SRSG, and the SRSG or by CPIO for any of the 50 press releases reviewed covering the period January 2014 to March 2017. In addition, while the Mission documented clearance procedures initially in the standard operating procedures issued in November 2016, these were not disseminated and implemented by CPIO.

43. This was because there was no formal requirement to maintain documentation of pre-approval/clearance for public information outputs. The Mission was of the view that there were adequate mechanisms for holding its officials accountable for their delegated responsibilities.

44. As a result, there was a risk of release of inaccurate or inappropriate disclosure of classified information that could damage the reputation and credibility of the Mission and loss of accountability of concerned staff.

(8) UNMISS should maintain documentary evidence of clearance of public information outputs.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 8 and stated that draft tracking and media analysis tools and a template to provide for documentation of clearance of public information outputs had been produced and was pending final review and approval. Recommendation 8 remains open pending receipt of evidence of implementation of the media tracking table to document clearance of public information outputs.

D. Media monitoring and capacity building

Need to analyse developments and trends from media monitoring

45. The DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requires the CPIO to ensure that media monitoring include a review of local print and electronic media such as newspapers, news agencies, radio, television and websites, regional and international media and require timely distribution of media monitoring results to senior mission leadership and other relevant offices at United Nations Headquarters. The Policy also requires regular analysis of developments and trends and any special monitoring.

46. UNMISS prepared daily media monitoring reports that included news from local print and electronic media such as newspapers, news agencies, radio, television and websites, regional and international media and distributed this to senior management and staff through email. The CPIO did not analyse developments and trends from its media monitoring in 37 out of 39 months from January 2014 to March 2017. This included news items from its media monitoring related to allegations of ethnic cleansing, mass rape, refugee crisis, attack on UNMISS camps, killing of UN workers, attacks on peacekeepers, mediation efforts and implementation of the peace process.

47. This was mainly due to lack of a mechanism for analysing developments and trends from media monitoring and lack of continuity of analysis and monitoring activities initiated by previous CPIO personnel. The OiC, CPIO stated that the CPIO was in the process of developing a media analysis system to identify trends in relation to particular political and security events as well as favourable and unfavourable coverage of Mission activities.

48. Without regular analysis of developments and trends, there was a risk that UNMISS could miss the opportunity to timely and appropriately respond to events, developments and trends critical to the implementation of the Mission's mandate.

(9) UNMISS should establish a mechanism for analysing developments and trends critical to the implementation of the Mission’s mandate from its media monitoring.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 9 and stated that draft tracking and media analysis tools for media monitoring had been produced and was pending final review and approval. Recommendation 9 remains open pending receipt of evidence of implementation of media analysis tools.

Need to properly induct new staff and identify staff training needs

49. The DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requires the CPIO to develop ongoing training procedures for mission personnel, whose work entails significant public information activity. The CPIO must have highly skilled and experienced staff and be equipped with appropriate communication tools to address key audiences, through both traditional and digital platforms.

50. A review of the skills and capacity of CPIO staff in Juba and in three states indicated the following:

- From two out of three states visited, recently appointed CPIO staff did not receive formal job-specific induction and were not fully aware of some of the strategic priorities of the CPIO and Mission responses to some questions during sensitization workshops with local communities such as those relating to the Mission’s ability to protect civilians in respect of which there was a Mission position;
- Staff in the CPIO offices in the three states visited consisted of United Nations volunteer team leaders supported by local staff that performed multiple tasks including outreach, radio and media relations to allow for continuity when one is out of the duty station. However, the Mission had not trained the staff for the demands of the job which were not aligned with their capacity and skill. The field offices had the biggest protection of civilian camps in South Sudan and were in ongoing conflict zones;
- Skills in ensuring journalists retained objectivity was lacking for some of the national staff in the CPIO team. For instance, OIOS observed a situation where a team member was openly celebrating the taking of a town by a party to the ongoing conflict; and
- Its teams in the states were limited in reaching some sectors of their communities due to language and ethnicity barriers. The team in Upper Nile did not have a member from the Dinka ethnicity, impeding the team from reaching people from that ethnicity in the area.

51. The above resulted because of inadequate guidance on inducting and briefing new staff on the section’s strategic priorities and work practices as well as inadequate ongoing training to enhance their capacity. The CPIO had only undertaken 2 out of 14 courses planned for the period 2015/16.

52. Consequently, UNMISS missed the opportunity to obtain the support for the Mission mandate from some of their target audiences. In addition, some of the public information staff failed to uphold the highest standards of efficiency and competency.

(10) UNMISS should provide job-specific induction or mentoring and briefing for new staff and ongoing training for the Communication and Public Information Office staff.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 10 and stated that induction briefings had been, and continued to be, undertaken for newly arrived staff. The Office intended to undertake a retreat in February 2018

pending the ordering of equipment for multimedia training. Recommendation 10 remains open pending receipt of evidence of induction briefings provided to new staff and implementation of mentoring and ongoing training programme.

E. Coordination of activities with other sections

Need for effective coordination with other Mission components and CPIO field offices

53. The DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requires the CPIO to manage and coordinate communications content, and work closely with other components of the mission as part of the overall mission communications strategy.

54. Field offices did not always cover important events in the field/states. For instance, in June 2017, the CPIO team in Western Equatorial State did not give adequate coverage of a key four-day event organized by the Civil Affairs Section to address inter-communal violence between pastoral communities in Yambio and various key stakeholders from non-governmental bodies and local leaders from the local ethnic communities. Assistance in resolving inter-communal violence is linked to promotion of human rights/protection of civilians, to which the CPIO field office should have given due prominence. Also, activities of the human rights section in South Sudan did not receive sufficient attention for onward public communication by the CPIO.

55. The above resulted because there were inadequate mechanisms for coordinating planned activities of the various components with the CPIO and due to weaknesses in the functioning of the teams in the field offices, which did not always work harmoniously. The Mission had also not clarified how the CPIO staff should coordinate the processing of public information outputs in coordination with the unit heads and the heads of field offices. Consequently, UNMISS missed the opportunity to publicize some key activities relevant to the Mission's work and goals of the mission in its efforts to generate support and understanding among various stakeholders.

56. Under the revised CPIO structure, the field offices now report to the Chief of Strategic Communications, which enhances the coordination and planning across units as well as sharing information on the activities of Mission components to facilitate the prioritization of key events. The Mission clarified that the Office's focus when attending Mission activities is to explain the Mission's concept and mandate from a journalistic approach rather than faithfully recording activities or events in their entirety. Based on the action taken by UNMISS, OIOS did not make a recommendation at this time.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

57. 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
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STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the public information programme in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
1	UNMISS should take action to ensure that its public information strategy contains essential elements including key performance indicators and mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of its communication and public information programme.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that UNMISS has conducted perception survey and developed media tracking, analysis tools and monitoring mechanisms.	30 June 2018
2	UNMISS should fill the position of the Chief of Communications and Public Information Office.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that the Chief CPIO post has been filled.	30 June 2018
3	UNMISS should ensure the Communications and Public Information Office develops its annual work plans covering all units.	Important	O	Receipt of a copy of the annual CPIO work plan covering all units.	31 December 2017
4	UNMISS should take measures to increase its capacity for live programming during evening peak hours and implement procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of radio programmes in reaching their intended audience.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of measures taken by the Office to increase its capacity for live programming during evening peak hours and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.	31 December 2017
5	The Mission should provide resources to facilitate preventive maintenance at radio transmission sites.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of implementation of the maintenance plan.	30 June 2018
6	UNMISS should develop and implement a social media strategy as part of its communication strategy to increase audience engagement and facilitate disseminating information rapidly and widely.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of implementation of the digital media strategy.	30 June 2018
7	UNMISS should implement the DPI/DPKO Operational Policy requirements for archiving information and train public information staff.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of implementation of TRIM and training of staff to systematically archive public information materials.	31 March 2018
8	UNMISS should maintain documentary evidence of clearance of public information outputs.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of implementation of the media tracking table to document clearance of public information outputs.	30 November 2017

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 UNMISS in response to recommendations.

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the public information programme in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical¹/ Important²	C/ O³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date⁴
9	UNMISS should establish a mechanism for analysing developments and trends critical to the implementation of the Mission's mandate from its media monitoring.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of implementation of media analysis tools.	30 November 2017
10	UNMISS should provide job-specific induction or mentoring and briefing for new staff and ongoing training for the Communication and Public Information Office staff.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of induction briefings provided to new staff and implementation of mentoring and ongoing training programme.	28 February 2018

APPENDIX I

Management Response

Management Response

Audit of the public information programme in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	UNMISS should ensure that its public information strategy contains essential elements including key performance indicators and mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of its communication and public information programme.	Important	YES	Senior Public Information Officer (evaluation of strategy and KPIs) Communications and Public Information Service (Opinion Survey)	30 June 2018.	Implementation in Progress: Bidding for perception survey is ongoing. Waiting progress on the development of tracking and analysis tools by the Media Relations team.
2	UNMISS should fill the position of the Chief of Communications and Public Information Office.	Important	YES	Communications and Public Information Service / Radio Unit	30 June 2018.	Implementation in Progress: The Programme Manager (SRSG) introduced changes to the Section in July 2017 in order to align its objectives with the mandate of UNMISS. Now that the restructuring has been finalized, the Programme Manager is further reviewing the roster to consider applicants.
3	UNMISS should ensure the Communications and Public Information Office develops its annual work plans covering all units.	Important	YES	Communications and Public Information	31 December 2017	Implementation in Progress: The work plan is being developed.

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

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

Management Response

Audit of the public information programme in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan]

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
				Service / Radio Unit		
4	UNMISS should take measures to increase its capacity for live programming during evening peak hours and implement procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of radio programmes in reaching their intended audience.	Important	YES	Communications and Public Information Service	Redeployment of staff -31 December 2017. Perception Survey 30 June 2018.	Implementation in Progress. Discussions are ongoing with the Special Planning Unit and Human Resources Section on the redeployment of five Language Assistants. Bidding for the perception survey is ongoing.
5	The Mission should provide resources to facilitate preventive maintenance at radio transmission sites.	Important	YES	Communications and Public Information Service / Technical and Production Unit	30 June 2018	Recommendation in progress. UNMISS started to issue a monthly maintenance plan starting from November 2017. An update on the implementation of maintenance plans will be provided.
6	UNMISS should develop and implement a social media strategy as part of its communication strategy to increase audience engagement and facilitate disseminating information rapidly and widely.	Important	YES	Senior Public Information Officer	30 June 2018	Recommendation in progress. The UNMISS Digital Media Strategy has been developed. The website has been refreshed and technical work is underway on updating all social media platforms. An update on the implementation of the UNMISS Digital Media Strategy will be provided.
7	UNMISS should implement the DPI/DPKO Operational Policy	Important	YES	Communications and Public	31 March 2018.	Recommendation in Progress: The TRIM database is used for archiving information. The

Management Response

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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	requirements for archiving information and train public information staff.			Information Service		second part of TRIM training is planned for early January.
8	UNMISS should maintain documentary evidence of clearance of public information outputs.	Important	YES	Media Relations Unit	30 November 2017.	Recommendation in Progress. Draft tracking and analysis tools and template has been produced and is pending final review and approval
9	UNMISS should establish a mechanism for analysing developments and trends critical to the implementation of the Mission's mandate from its media monitoring.	Important	YES	Media Monitoring Unit	30 November 2017.	Recommendation in Progress. Draft tracking and analysis tools and template has been produced and is pending final review and approval
10	UNMISS should provide job specific induction or mentoring and briefing for new staff and ongoing training for the Communication and Public Information Office staff.	Important	YES	Communications and Public Information Service	28 February 2018.	Recommendation in Progress. A retreat is scheduled to take place in February 2018 pending the ordering of equipment for multimedia to cater training component during the retreat.