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Office operations (Issue 1)

inconsistent job descriptions, an insufficient number of staff to perform the various functions, and inadequate monitoring and oversight.

Recommendation 1 (Corporate): Improve the ability of Regional Offices to efficiently and effectively function by: (a) issuing a memorandum to all offices that clearly reiterates the roles/functions of Regional Offices and the minimum expectations regarding monitoring and oversight, communications and reporting between the Regional Offices and the respective field offices; and (b) reviewing and updating all job descriptions for Regional Office Directors and Country Representatives to ensure clarity and consistency regarding their roles, responsibilities and authorities.

Recommendation 2: Strengthen the Office’s ability to meet its mandate by: (a) aligning the Office’s human resources with activities to be performed as approved in the Annual Work Plan – this should include identifying necessary funding and providing the analysis, funding and authorization for the human resources necessary for the Office to be effective in carrying out its mandate; (b) implementing systems to permit ongoing tracking, review and reporting of the Office’s progress toward implementation of its Strategic Note/Annual Work Plan; and (c) defining and communicating to all Country Offices within the Arab States region the requirements for standardized reports and communiques on all activities within individual countries and the Office’s role to validate the periodic reports.

"Corporate issue" means action is required from a headquarters’ bureau.

Management comments and action plan

The Director a.i., Regional Office for Arab States, and the Director of the Programme Division accepted all of the recommendations and are in the process of implementing them. Comments and/or additional information provided by the Office and/or Programme Division have been incorporated in the report, where appropriate.

Issues with less significance (not included in this report) have been discussed directly with management and actions have been initiated to address them.

Helge S. Ostvetein
Director
Office of Audit and Investigations
I. About

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Governance and strategic management

1. Organizations
**Recommendation 1 (Corporate):**

Improve the ability of Regional Offices to efficiently and effectively function by:

- The roles and functions of Regional Offices are clearly defined, with minimum expectations regarding monitoring and oversight, communications and reporting between Regional Offices and the respective field offices.
- Reviewing and updating all job descriptions for Regional Office Directors and Country Representatives to ensure clarity regarding their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

**Responsible HQ bureau:** Programme Division, in collaboration with the Human Resources Division.
Recommendation 2:

Strengthen the Office’s ability to meet its mandate by:

- The Office’s human resources activities to be performed as approved in the Annual Work Plan should include identifying necessary funding and providing the analysis, funding and authorization for the human resources necessary for the effective in carrying out its mandate.
- Implementing systems to permit ongoing tracking, review and reporting of the Office’s progress toward implementation of such projects.
- Defining and communicating to all personnel within the Arab States region the requirements for standardized reports and communiques on all activities within individual countries and the Office’s role to validate the periodic reports.

1. Coordination, knowledge management, advisory and support services
**Recommendation:**

Strengthen the processes for knowledge products and support services by:

- developing a strategy and implementation plan for the knowledge hub that would determine how knowledge products are to be gathered, produced, maintained, accessed/disseminated and communicated to interested parties;
- implementing procedures for communication of the support and advisory resources available in the Office, their functions and roles, as well as for requesting their assistance;
- implementing communications protocols for external UN Women offices and presences in the region of other external stakeholders;
- implementing a formal tracking system for services requested and provided.

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2. Programme and management

There were still some gaps: it was a challenge to achieve a sufficient level.

...
Recommendation 4:

- Disseminate policies and procedures in an environment, including but not limited to guidance on:
  - What constitutes an ‘urgent’ or ‘crisis-related’ project;
  - Management arrangements for when headquarters staff are directly involved in field projects;
  - Instructions on depositing cash at headquarters;
  - Policy related to changes in delegated authority or their.

Responsible HQ bureau: 

3. Programme monitoring and evaluation: 

   A tool to follow A.


This issue was also raised in OAI’s Audit Report regarding the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. To address the issue, UN Women management has already established an action plan expected to be completed by the end of 2015. Therefore, no recommendation is being made in this report.

C. Operations

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