



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



eio

evaluation
and internal
oversight

Report of Activities for 2023

Office of Evaluation and Internal Oversight (EIO)

OFFICE OF EVALUATION AND INTERNAL OVERSIGHT

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2023



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Vienna, January 2024

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Executive Summary

1. The Office of Evaluation and Internal Oversight (EIO), in line with its Strategy for 2020-2024 and its updated Work Plan for 2023, continued providing value-added independent and objective assurance, advice, investigation, and evaluation providing services to the Director General and senior management/offices to contribute to a more efficient and effective UNIDO. In 2023, EIO issued a total of **14 strategic or corporate level audit or evaluation reports**¹ covering various aspects of UNIDO's priorities and operations. These include EIO advisory engagements and ad-hoc reviews to contribute to inform senior management decision-making, risk management, and efforts towards achieving greater organizational results.

2. **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** present the overview of EIO reports by engagement type and business areas, respectively.

Figure 1. EIO reports by engagement type (14 Reports)

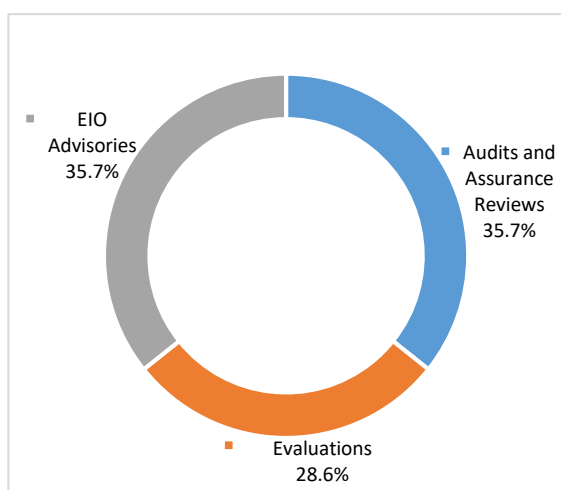
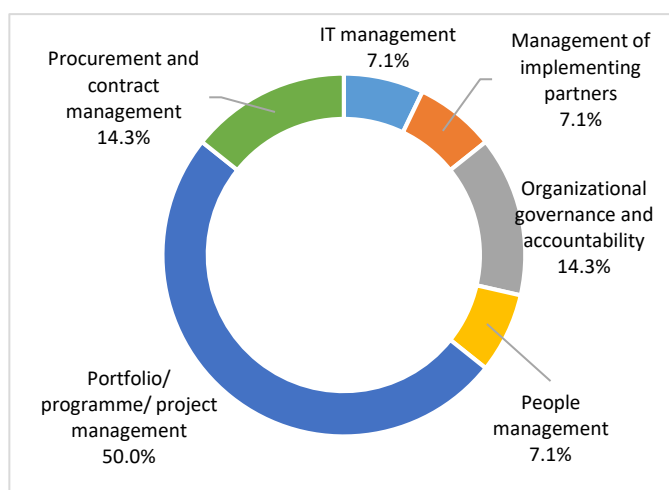


Figure 2. EIO reports by business areas (14 Reports)



3. In addition to the above key reports, **EIO issued 38 independent project evaluation reports.**

4. Based on allegations of misconduct received, **EIO completed 17 preliminary evaluation reports (PERs) and 3 full-fledged investigations.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

5. EIO's audit and assurance review engagements contributed to an improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of UNIDO's processes and strengthened controls when needed. As an example, due to one assurance review, **savings of EUR 181,670** and a **reduction in staff workload** were achieved in the Asset Management and Logistics Services (COR/AML).

6. EIO designed and facilitated **capacity-building workshops** for managers, team leaders, and other personnel in the Directorate of Corporate Services and Operations (COR). The overall goal of the workshops was to strengthen UNIDO's internal control environment by establishing, among participants, a common understanding of the UNIDO Three Lines Model (3LM) and its link to the design and effective operationalization of UNIDO's Internal Control Framework (ICF). There were seven sessions of the workshop in which **a total of 84 managers**, team leaders, and other personnel were trained. All the feedback survey respondents confirmed that the workshops fully met the stated objectives.

¹ These reports exclude preliminary Evaluation Reports (PERs) completed by the Investigations function.

7. In August 2023, EIO launched its new online evaluation training that allows staff, evaluation consultants, and national partners to participate in evaluation training remotely. This new format aims to ensure (to the extent possible) that evaluation capacity development can be conducted independently of external factors and conditions and strengthen future evaluation capacity in-house. As of end-2023, **73 persons** had successfully completed the online training.

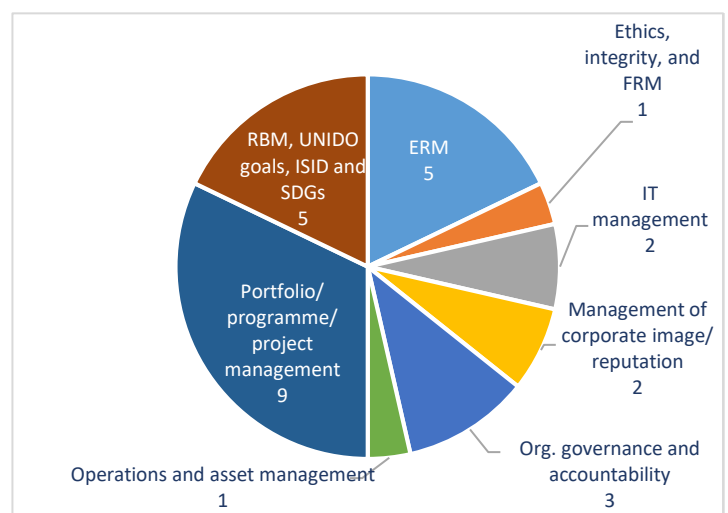
8. In November 2023 EIO organized a regional evaluation capacity-building workshop for the counterparts in the Arab Region. The workshop was facilitated by EIO Staff and had an approach of combining e-learning modules (done by participants beforehand), and the face-to-face event, which was focused on practical exercises, covering Results Based Management and project management fundamentals, and evaluation process (planning, commissioning, preparation of Terms of References, conduct, reporting and use of evaluations). This workshop included one special session on “Gender Mainstreaming in Evaluation” that was provided by the representative of the Evaluation Office of UN Women in Egypt. 12 Government counterparts’ participants attended from the following countries: Jordan, Libya, Palestine, Sudan, Oman, Morocco, Tunisia, and Iraq. In addition, six participants from UNIDO field offices in Egypt, Jordan Algeria, and Lebanon.

9. EIO provided advisory support to management in the form of inputs and comments on **28** administrative issuances, strategic documents, operational documents, and agreements, among others. **Figures 3 and 4** provide an overview of EIO’s advisory support to management.

Figure 3. EIO advisory support by document type



Figure 4. EIO advisory support by business areas



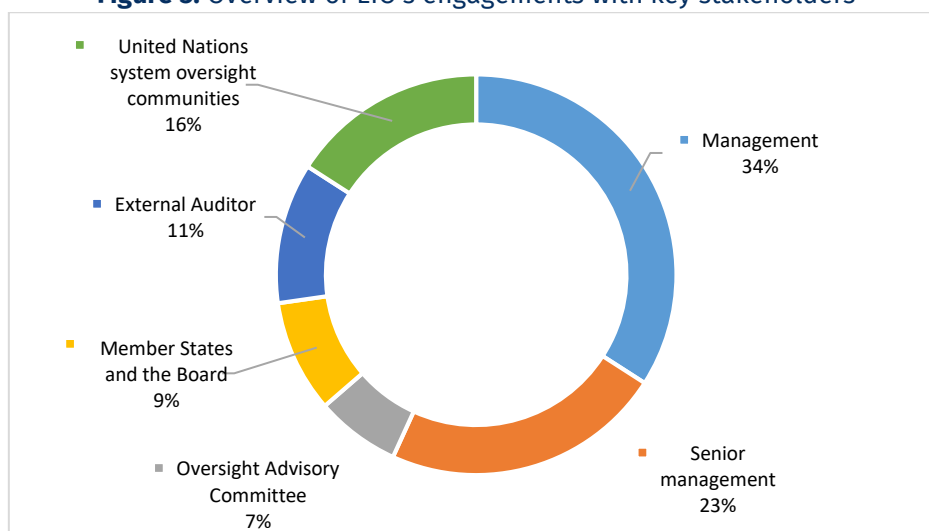
10. As part of its **outreach and knowledge-sharing activities**, EIO conducted its regular briefing to representatives of Permanent Missions on UNIDO evaluation and internal oversight activities, in September 2023. On that occasion, EIO provided information on findings from selected strategic and country-level evaluations, and audit engagements, and on EIO’s ongoing and planned activities under its updated works plan for 2023. The Office also updated the corporate image of EIO webpages on the UNIDO intra, extra- and internet, including related databases, and prepared an EIO communications approach.

11. EIO cooperated with the External Auditor by sharing final management letters for undertaken audits and advisories. EIO also provided information in the context of the update of recommendations emanating from previous External Auditor reports. In addition, the EIO attended to ad-hoc requests from and/or related to the work of the External Auditor by providing the sought information.

12. The Director, EIO attended the UNIDO Leadership retreat (February 2023), and the UNIDO Leadership Board meeting (August 2023) where he made a presentation on key findings from the

Synthesis of UNIDO independent evaluations, 2018-2022. In conjunction with the twentieth session of the UNIDO General Conference, and following an invitation by the Managing Director, GLO, he participated in a meeting of field representatives under the title “UNIDO: HQ - Field Dialogue” and contributed as a panel member to the open session “Strengthened HQ-field cooperation” (30 November 2023). EIO participates as an observer on the Operations Committee, and the Procurement Committee. **Figure 5** provides an overview of EIO’s engagements and interactions with key stakeholders.

Figure 5. Overview of EIO’s engagements with key stakeholders



13. EIO ensures that its **team members** are given opportunities for professional development and growth, including maintaining and obtaining certifications, as feasible under the continuous resources’ constraints. As a result, EIO personnel have a wide range of professional certifications, qualifications, and training that are relevant for delivering on the Office’s mandate, including Certified Internal Auditor or Certified Government Audit Professional; Certified Fraud Examiner; Certified Public Accountant, Chartered Accountant, or similar; Certification in ERM, Internal Controls, or similar; Certification in Evaluations; Project Management Certification; Certification in Law; Auditing Artificial Intelligence; Information Security and Data Protection Certification; Data Analytics; and Leadership and Management. 100% of staff have completed UNIDO mandatory training for 2023 while 100% of personnel have earned the required CPE for their professional fields. EIO continued with its Learning and Innovation Series, in which team members shared the latest insights on various topics, including among others, the application of new technologies in audit, investigation, and evaluations. **However, it should be noted that further targeted professional development is still needed in the areas of Artificial Intelligence; IT Security, Data Protection; and Data Analytics.**

14. There are strong indications that **EIO adds greater value** to the Organization through its products and services as well as its collaboration, interactions, and engagements with key stakeholders. EIO’s products and services meet global standards as well as the quality needs of its key stakeholders. The results of the client satisfaction survey on EIO engagements show that clients are satisfied with EIO’s products and services.

EIO INDEPENDENCE

15. EIO confirms that the Office did not take on or perform any management roles and responsibilities (i.e., non-oversight related roles and responsibilities) during 2023. EIO confirms that in performing its internal audit and investigation activities during the reporting period, it functioned independently and objectively without any interference or influence from any internal or external parties. However, limitations due to operational budget and human resources constraints should be noted.

16. EIO confirms that its evaluations, audit, assurance reviews, advisory engagements, and investigations were conducted under the framework of the EIO Charter and the supplementary Evaluation, Internal Audit, and Investigation policies; which are aligned with the norms and standards of the United National Evaluation Group (UNEG), the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), and the standards applicable to administrative investigations, as reflected in the Uniform Principles and Guidelines for Investigations as endorsed by the 10th Conference of International Investigators.

Introduction

Who We Are

17. The Office of Evaluation and Internal Oversight (EIO) is responsible for the three **core oversight functions in UNIDO**, namely: **evaluation, internal audit, and investigation**.

18. EIO is responsible for providing independent and objective assurance, advice, investigation, and evaluation to add value and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of UNIDO's operations, internal control framework, risk management, results-based management, and governance processes. EIO provides evidence-based information that is independent, credible, reliable, and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations, and lessons learned into the decision-making processes at the organization-wide, programme, and project levels. EIO also assesses the extent to which UNIDO's programmes and projects, as well as thematic areas, correctly address and effectively achieve the stated objectives of the Organization. The Office undertakes fact-finding in cases of alleged irregularity, misconduct, waste of resources, and/or violation of UNIDO's regulations, rules, and procedures with a view to safeguarding the Organization's interests and ensuring accountability.

19. The EIO structure and mandate are provided in the Charter of the Office of Evaluation and Internal Oversight.

20. As established in its Charter, EIO functions are further aligned with the United Nations and international professional standards, as follows:

- **Internal audit:** The International Professional Practice Framework (IPPF) of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) the Core Principles for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, the Code of Ethics, the Mission of Internal Audit, and the Definition of Internal Auditing;
- **Investigation:** The Uniform Principles and Guidelines for Investigations, adopted by the Conference of International Investigators;
- **Evaluation:** The United Nations Evaluation Group's Norms and Standards for evaluation in the United Nations system.

21. EIO also gets direct advice from the UNIDO Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (OAC), in relation to the EIO functions.

22. EIO is the organizational focal point for liaising with the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the United Nations system regarding its activities in relation to UNIDO; it also functions as the Secretariat for the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (OAC).

23. EIO reports to the Director General and to the Industrial Development Board (Board).

Our Strategy

24. In March 2023, EIO conducted a mid-term strategy review, and updated the EIO Strategy 2020-2024, to reflect relevant changes and developments in UNIDO and its context, including the UNIDO reform process started in 2022, the updated management priorities and the new UNIDO organizational structure. Consequently, EIO's mission and vision were revisited and enhanced, and EIO's strategic objectives were reviewed in light of the progress achieved, and the new context and challenges for EIO and UNIDO. The updated EIO Strategy 2020-2024 was issued in June 2023.

EIO Vision:

Our vision is for UNIDO to be recognized and trusted by partners and stakeholders for the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of its work.

EIO Mission:

Our Mission is to contribute to the achievement of UNIDO's goals by supporting and enhancing sound governance and adequate internal controls, risk management, accountability, innovation, and learning through professional, independent, objective, and useful internal audits, evaluations, and investigations of UNIDO's programmes, projects, processes, and activities.

25. To discharge its mandate and realize its mission, EIO work will continue to be guided by the following strategic objectives (SO):

- **SO-1. Increased effectiveness of EIO functions. Demonstrated added value to UNIDO;** and
- **SO-2. Sustained high-quality EIO processes and products.**

26. EIO will continue to implement the following initiatives to guide its work, further the achievement of EIO Strategic Objectives, and form part of the EIO staff members' compact:

- Increase the utility of EIO within UNIDO;
- Drive innovations in EIO functions; and
- Build strategic partnerships and collaborations with internal and external stakeholders.

Internal Oversight in 2023

Internal Audit Work Plan

27. The updated 2023 internal audit work plan included **nine audit, assurance review, and advisory engagements** including ad hoc assessments requested by senior management. The Internal Oversight function completed **eight (89%)** of the engagements in the updated work plan. The assurance review of Enterprise Risk Management was ongoing as of end-2023, and it is intended to be completed by end-February 2024.

28. The status of the updated work plan 2023, as of December 2023 is presented in the table below.

Engagements in 2023	Type	Status
(1) Handover of projects in the UNIDO restructuring process	Audit	Completed (final report issued in November 2023)
(2) Selection of UNIDO implementing partners	Assurance review	Completed (final report issued in November 2023)
(3) Internal controls in the second line of the UNIDO Three Lines Model	Assurance review	Completed (final report issued in November 2023)
(4) Privileged user access management of selected ERP systems	Assurance review	Completed (final report issued in August 2023)
(5) Enterprise risk management	Audit	The engagement started in October 2023 and is ongoing.
(6) Project implementation	Ad hoc assessment	Completed (report issued September 2023)
(7) Procurement Process Improvements	Ad hoc assessment	Completed (report issued November 2023)
(8) Staff Welfare Fund	Ad hoc assessment	Completed (report issued November 2023)
(9) Implementation of audit and evaluation processes in TM+	MAP follow-up engagement	Completed (report issued June 2023)
UNIDO GEF Secretariat <i>(Excluded from updated work plan).</i>	Audit	This engagement was excluded because of reprioritization.
Project assets management <i>(Excluded from updated work plan).</i>	Audit	This engagement was excluded because this area had been covered both by the External Auditor, as well as to some degree in the Internal Controls Assurance Review.

Follow up on Management Action Plans (MAPs)

29. The UNIDO Secretariat Structure 2022 (DGB/2022/19 of 7 October 2022) for the first time assigns to Managing Directors, the direct responsibility for overseeing and ensuring the implementation of relevant recommendations made by and MAPs agreed with oversight bodies and external/internal auditors². This strengthens accountability in each Directorate and augments the role of the Senior Level Focal Point (SLFP) who is responsible for ensuring the implementation of all recommendations and MAPs in coordination with relevant managers and regularly reports to the Executive Board³.

² DGB/2022/19

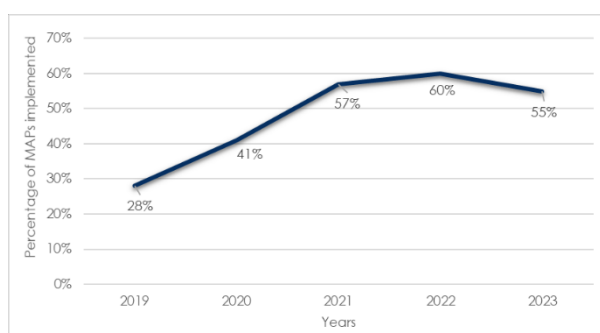
³ DGB/2021/03

This notwithstanding, staff reassignments which resulted in changes in the ownership of MAPs, and the late designation of SLFP created significant bottlenecks in the implementation of MAPs during 2023.

30. EIO carried out several activities to facilitate the implementation of MAPs. Among others, EIO: (a) prepared and issued to the Director General, the SLFP, and relevant managers (including Managing Directors) summaries of key EIO engagement reports to provide them with an overview of risks that required immediate attention; (b) presented the status of implementation of MAPs to Managing Director, COR after his designation as the SLFP; (c) held separate meetings with Managing Directors and new MAPs owners to explain and provide background to the MAPs being assigned to them; (d) introduced TeamMate+ for enhanced efficiency and automation in the follow-up process for MAPs; and (e) followed-up on and monitored the progress of MAP implementation by regularly engaging with relevant offices.

31. Despite the above efforts, the implementation of MAPs declined in 2023. **Figure 6** presents a trend analysis for the internal audit function covering the last five years, revealing that the overall implementation rate of internal audit MAPs declined in 2023.

Figure 6. Overall implementation rate of internal audit MAPs in the past five years.



32. The percentage of MAPs implemented in 2023 is 12% out of those due in 2023 and before. As of end-2023, in total 29 MAPs were overdue for implementation, and only four were implemented. Senior management's attention is drawn to the importance of timely implementing MAPs since most of the outstanding MAPs reflect **medium-high and high risks**. Addressing these MAPs will contribute to the optimization of TC processes and full cost recovery, effective and efficient allocation of resources, enhancement of internal processes, including staff planning and development, and procurement processes, as well as strengthening the internal governance structure

Risk Escalation Procedure

33. EIO continued providing support to the Managing Director, COR in his role as Senior-level Focal Point (SLFP) for monitoring the implementation of recommendations and MAPs from EIO. A revision of the risk escalation procedure is under discussion in order to render it more pragmatic in the context of the organizational setup.

Investigation function

34. At the beginning of 2023, 10 complaints were carried over from the past year and 22 complaints were received during the period. As documented in internal Preliminary Evaluation Reports, 14 complaints were closed after conducting preliminary evaluations and, in addition, three were converted to full-fledged investigations. Two letters to management were issued to address an

alleged misuse of UNIDO's name and logo by a third party and an alleged misconduct by an intern. At the end of 2023, 12 complaints were pending evaluation.

35. Three full-fledged investigations were completed, and reports thereof submitted to the Director General in 2023.

36. At the end of 2023, three full-fledged investigations were ongoing.

37. During the period, comments were provided to LEG in relation to disciplinary measures and administrative decisions appealed before the ILOAT.

38. An information circular on UNIDO's response to misconduct in 2022, prepared in cooperation with COR/EAU, COR/HRS, and ODG/LEG, was issued accordingly (IC/2023/03) The information circular for 2023 is under preparation, and expected to be issued in the 1st quarter 2024. Contributing to the Organization-wide efforts on Fraud Awareness and Prevention, EIO made a presentation during an interactive live session that was organized by COR/EAU (November 2023) for all UNIDO personnel, as well as during the 3rd quarter field office video conferences (September 2023).

Staffing

39. EIO/IOU continued with the services of a consultant on a regular basis against the vacant GS position. EIO/IOU engaged two Investigation Consultants on a When-Actually-Employed (WAE) basis through supplemental funds, made available by the Office of the Director General upon request. As of end-2023, EIO/IOU had completed the selection process of one Investigator (P3), who will start his assignment on 1 February 2024.

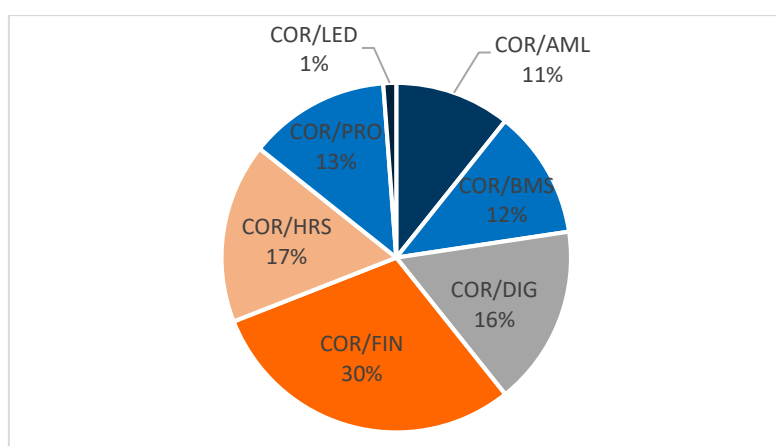
Learning and development

40. In 2023, as part of its Learning and Innovation Series, EIO conducted two events related to the EIO strategy for EIO staff. The Chief of EIO/IOU and two auditors participated in two regular experience exchange events organized by the Austrian Chapter of the IIA. Two auditors continued their work on the customization of the upgraded TM+ software and took part in end-user training. The investigator completed the Summer Academy course by the International Anti-corruption Academy (IACA). Further, all EIO/IOU team attended a training on TM+ Analytics. The three internal auditors joined the online training on auditing AI organized by the ILO. In addition, the whole EIO/IOU team participated in the VBOs' Dignity and Inclusion learning series module on Harassment Prevention, and one auditor completed the United Nations online training on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Abuse by United Nations Personnel. In addition, the auditors and the investigator participated in several internal and external webinars on different topics, to stay abreast with current developments in UNIDO, as well as in the audit and investigation professions.

Capacity-building workshops for managers, team leaders, and other personnel in COR

41. As part of the assurance review of internal controls in the UNIDO 3LM, EIO designed and facilitated capacity-building workshops for managers, team leaders, and other personnel in COR/AML, COR/BMS, COR/DIG, COR/FIN, COR/HRS, COR/LED, and COR/PRO. The overall goal of the workshops was to establish, among participants, a common understanding of the UNIDO 3LM and its link to the design and effective implementation of internal controls, which will enable them to contribute meaningfully to the process of updating the ICF Guide and fully operationalizing UNIDO's ICF. There were seven sessions of the workshop in which **a total of 84 personnel (including managers and team leaders) participated**. A disaggregation of the total participants is presented in **Figure 7**.

Figure 7. The proportion of total workshop participants by Division/Service.



42. EIO conducted an anonymous feedback survey at the end of each workshop session. In total, **48 (57%) participants** responded to the feedback survey. All the respondents (i.e., 100%) confirmed that the workshops fully met the stated objectives.

Audit software

43. The upgrade of the audit software to TeamMate+ (TM+) for the use of this software by the different EIO functions was completed in 2023 and launched for use by MAP owners in June 2023. A related report on the “Implementation of audit and evaluation processes in TM+” was issued and a stakeholder MS Teams channel was launched. IOU continues to make full use of the software in all its audit products.

Cooperation and exchange with the internal audit and investigation communities

44. In September, EIO participated in the annual RIAS/UNRIAS conference hosted by the World Bank in August 2023, with two-panel discussions attended by the Chief EIO/IOU on the new IIA Standards and experiences with the accountability frameworks and assurance maps. The EIO auditors participated in some sessions of the conference online. In November 2023, EIO participated in the 23rd Conference of International Investigators (CII) and a pre-conference training, attended also by further investigation staff. The EIO investigator co-led a session in the CII on the Unique Challenges of Small Investigative Offices together with representatives from PAHO and ILO. The EIO investigator, together with the Head of Investigations from WIPO conducted an External Quality Assessment of the investigation function of UNESCO during the fourth quarter of 2023. EIO's joint engagement approach was also presented by the EIO/IOU Chief and one auditor at the Vienna Evaluation Group meeting. EIO provided comments on various topics of mutual interest to the oversight services of the UN system, and participated in surveys conducted within the community, and participated in all regular meetings of the UNRIAS and UNRIS network, as well as UNRIAS strategic working groups and a task force on ERM.

Evaluation in 2023

Evaluation Work Plan

45. The 2023 evaluation work plan (updated, January 2023) envisaged conducting two evaluations carried over from 2022 (Synthesis of evaluations 2018-2022 and the evaluation of Programme for Country Partnerships (PCP) strategic framework), finalization of the evaluation of PCP in Peru, and two new thematic evaluations (evaluation of knowledge management; and strategic partnerships with the private sector).

46. EIO/IEU continued ensuring that its evaluation activities provide evidence-based information at strategic and project levels. Evaluation products (incl. evaluation reports) are published on EIO/IEU's intra- and internet pages respectively.

47. During the reporting period, the following three (two strategic and one cluster) evaluations, one synthesis of independent evaluations, two advisory reviews, and one evaluability assessment were completed:

Engagements in 2023	Type	Status
Knowledge management in UNIDO.	Independent strategic evaluation	Ongoing, according to the plan.
UNIDO's engagement with the private sector.	Independent evaluation	Ongoing, according to the plan.
Evaluability assessment of UNIDO's contribution to SDG 9	Evaluability Assessment	Completed
Cluster evaluation of eight GEF-funded polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) projects implemented by UNIDO during the period 2010-2023.	Synthesis	Completed (final report issued in October 2023)
Synthesis of UNIDO independent evaluations 2018-2022.	Synthesis	Completed (final report issued in July 2023)
UNIDO Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) framework.	Strategic Evaluation	Completed (final report issued in May 2023)
Advisory review of the approval process for allocation of programmable funds (RPTC and SRA).	Advisory review	Completed (final report issued in May 2023).
PCP Peru	Country Evaluation	Completed (Final report issued in April 2023)

Project evaluations

48. During the reporting period, thirty-eight (38) project evaluations and one cluster evaluation of eight projects were finalized.

49. EIO prepared updated criteria for project evaluations and presented it to the Operations Committee. In addition, a concept paper was prepared on the new criteria and budget provisions for evaluation in all technical cooperation projects as a basis for further in-house discussion, including the review of related administrative (UNIDO/DGAI.18 - New budget lines for monitoring, self-evaluation and independent evaluation of Technical Cooperation (TC) projects) that has been discussed with the Business Procedures Committee and is ongoing.

Evaluation Manual and documentation

50. In July 2023, EIO reviewed, updated, and published the Evaluation Manual, as well as new templates and guidance for evaluation products.

Evaluation capacity development

51. In August 2023, EIO/IEU launched its new online evaluation training that consists of three modules (Introduction to Evaluation in UNIDO (Module 1); Evaluation Fundamentals and Approaches (Module 2), and Commissioning and Managing Evaluations in UNIDO (Module 3)) that allows staff, evaluation consultants, and national partners participate in evaluation training remotely. This new format aims to ensure (to the extent possible) that evaluation capacity development can be conducted independent of external factors and conditions and strengthen future evaluation capacity in-house. The on-line evaluation training can be accessed from the UNIDO website and the intranet.

52. In line with the EIO work plan 2023, EIO conducted – in combination with the above e-learning modules – a regional evaluation capacity building workshop for UNIDO government counterparts (12), field and project staff (6) of the Arab Region in Cairo, Egypt (14-16 November 2023). The workshop also included a special session on Gender mainstreaming in evaluation that was provided by the representative of the Evaluation Office of UNWOMEN in Egypt.

Follow-up on the implementation of management action plans (MAPs) from strategic evaluations

53. Since 2021, for all strategic evaluations (including thematic and country-level evaluations) that assess systemic, cross-cutting, and/or corporate-level areas, the issuance of agreed specific management action plans (MAPs) that are based on findings and recommendations from these evaluations, has been implemented. This is expected to further increase management commitment and ownership in addressing the areas for improvement that these evaluations identified.

54. During the reporting period, two MAPs were agreed under the independent evaluation of the UNIDO Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) framework. Following last year's changes in ownership as a result of the organizational restructuring, EIO/IEU completed the process of confirming and/or re-mapping and identifying new owners for all open MAPs and reformulated MAPs (as needed) and confirmed/negotiated new implementation deadlines.

55. Monitoring of acceptance and implementation by management of recommendations from project evaluations continued during the reporting period.

Staffing

56. During the reporting period, EIO/IEU continued to operate with a further reduced staff capacity, (P5, P4, G6, and two ISAs) -as one Evaluation Officer (P4) was selected for a temporary (one year) assignment as a Rotational Gender Officer to work at COR/GEW as of April 2023). It is noted that the internal process for the recruitment of an Evaluation Officer (at the P3 level) that was initiated following budget approval in 2022 has been put on hold by Management in 2023.

Organizational development

57. As a joint project with EIO/IOU, EIO/IEU introduced "TeamMate+" for the follow-up on management action plans emanating from strategic evaluations. EIO/IEU finalized the migration of MAPs from strategic evaluations to TeamMate+ in 2023. The EIO/IEU team also completed the review and update of the Evaluation manual. The review and updating of other existing guidance documents is ongoing. EIO/IEU published two electronic issues of EvalNews to keep staff informed of EIO/IEU

completed, ongoing, and planned evaluation-related activities, and to foster further reflection, mutual learning, and continual improvement across UNIDO through the use of evaluations.

Cooperation and exchange with the evaluation community

58. The EIO evaluation function took regularly part in external evaluation activities and continued its engagement with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) with regard to evaluation-related activities and working groups, such as the: working group on mainstreaming environmental and social impacts into evaluation (co-chaired by UNIDO), UNEG Interest Group on evaluating the private sector (EIO/IEU is represented in this group), UN COVID-19 related evaluation initiatives, and the UN system-wide evaluation function. As a major engagement at UNEG-level, EIO served as a member of the Steering Committee of the Partnership Pillar Synthesis of the SDG Synthesis Coalition, with EIO co-leading – together with ILO, CAF, and UNDP representative – the Prosperity Pillar.

59. EIO also makes available its evaluation reports under a dedicated UNEG repository that contains all publicly available evaluation reports of UNEG agencies.

60. As one of the initiators to establish the UN+ Vienna Evaluation Group (comprised of staff from evaluation offices based in Vienna), EIO participated in three meetings of the Group in 2023 (one organized by EIO/IEU). The purpose of these meetings is, inter alia, to offer an additional platform for evaluation practice exchange and learning. EIO staff also attended the Asian Evaluation Week 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand (September 2023), and the first Impact Evaluation Forum, organized by the World Food Programme in Rome, Italy (December 2023).

EIO Cross-cutting Support

61. Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Coordination: As an organizational focal point for the JIU, EIO continued coordinating the submission of relevant documentation for all ongoing and completed reviews during the reporting period and facilitated the follow-up on open JIU recommendations. EIO collected and provided UNIDO's proposed input to the draft JIU programme of work 2024. The final JIU PoW 2024 was received from the JIU at the time of writing this report and shared with senior management as well as published on EIO's page on the intranet accordingly. EIO coordinated, among others, a meeting with JIU Inspectors responsible for an ongoing review and involved UNIDO staff at HQ. EIO participated in the JIU Focal Points meeting in Geneva, Switzerland (September 2023). As mandated, EIO reported on the Activities of the Joint Inspection Unit in a document that was presented to the Board in July 2023 (document IDB.51/21).

62. Oversight Advisory Committee (OAC) Secretariat: EIO continued to fulfill the Secretariat role of the OAC, including ad-hoc meetings and follow-up calls with the Chair. In 2023, the OAC Secretariat was also responsible for organizing the on-boarding of new members on the OAC that were appointed by the Board in November 2022 and in July 2023 respectively (documents IDB.50/24, IDB.51/23, and IDB.50/CRP.13). The eleventh meeting of the OAC was held at UNIDO Headquarters from 26 to 28 June 2023. The OAC Secretariat also arranged and coordinated the participation of the OAC Chair in the 8th Meeting of the UN System Oversight Committees (December 2023).

Outlook for 2024

63. EIO will continue contributing to the achievement of the Organization's strategic priorities/objectives, and in line with the EIO's strategy and its strategic priorities to increase the effectiveness of EIO functions, demonstrate added value to UNIDO, and sustain high-quality EIO processes and products. EIO's focus will lie on increasing the Office's utility within UNIDO, driving innovation in EIO functions; and building strategic partnerships and collaborations with internal and external stakeholders.

64. The EIO internal audit and evaluation work plans for 2024-2025 will address some of the top risks and evidence gaps identified, including Organizational governance and accountability, digital transformation (at the Secretariat), portfolio/programme/project management, financial management, people management, results-based management and alignment with ISID mandate and SDGs, and Enterprise Risk Management.

65. In 2024, EIO will not only be providing audit and evaluation products and services covering these domains but continue through its activities to provide greater insights for informed strategic decision-making, contribute to improved policy frameworks to achieve greater results, and support capacity-building

66. Further key activities in 2024 will include the upcoming external quality assessments for the audit, evaluation, and investigation functions, supporting the newly composed membership of the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee and its work plans for 2024, and engaging with EIO's key stakeholders, including the new External Auditor taking office in July 2024.



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