

## **59<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee**

**4-6 March 2014**

### **Agenda item 4(d)**

#### **Oral update on the work of the Inspector General's Office**

This update covers the period since the Inspector General's last presentation during the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Committee, *i.e.* October 2013 through January 2014.

#### **I. Internal audit function**

- The Inspector General's Office (IGO) continued to coordinate efforts to bring the internal audit function in-house and to establish an integrated oversight office. Meanwhile, a revised memorandum of understanding between UNHCR and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) was drafted and is under review.

#### **II. Inspection Service**

- The Inspection Service undertook activities related to the process of bringing the internal audit function in-house and plans to merge the audit and inspection functions. Meetings were held with the Audit Service within OIOS responsible for UNHCR in order to: discuss the inspection and audit methodologies currently in use by both offices; examine lessons learned from the 2012 joint audit-inspection mission to Tunisia; and establish an integrated methodology, including a common reporting format.
- The Inspection Service revised 19 annexes to the Inspection Handbook to reflect new or amended policies.
- With regard to compliance with recommendations, implementation reports were received from six countries; comments on the first and second implementation reports were sent to two countries; and compliance reports from three countries remain outstanding. As a result, 66 per cent of the recommendations from inspection cycles that remain open have either been implemented or are considered no longer applicable. For the majority of the remaining recommendations, implementation is ongoing.
- The Inspection Service coordinated UNHCR's inputs and comments on draft reports for the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and finalized JIU reports to the Secretariat of the Chief Executives Board. Furthermore, the IGO initiated reporting on compliance with outstanding recommendations from JIU reports issued between 2006 and 2012. As a result, UNHCR's acceptance rate increased from 70 per cent at the end of 2012 to 77 per cent last year. The rate of fully-implemented recommendations rose from 45 per cent at the end of 2012 to 61 per cent at the end of 2013, and implementation is ongoing for the remaining 38 per cent of the accepted recommendations. This means that UNHCR has implemented or is in the process of implementing 99 per cent of all accepted recommendations.
- As part of the efforts to enhance collaboration with the oversight entities in other United Nations agencies, the IGO held a series of meetings with senior oversight officials at the World Food Programme (WFP). Issues discussed included joint cooperation, the merging of UNHCR's internal audit and inspection functions, and joint follow-up to the 2013 WFP and UNHCR inspections of their respective operations in Mauritania.

#### **III. Investigation Service**

- Between October 2013 and January 2014, the Investigation Service registered 467 complaints, 66 of which related to possible staff misconduct. The majority of complaints (75 per cent)

continue to be linked to protection and assistance activities. These complaints continued to be referred to the relevant Regional Bureaux and Divisions within UNHCR, with which the Investigation Service works closely to determine how best to respond in a prompt and meaningful manner.

- During this same period, the Service opened 24 investigations relating to alleged staff misconduct; closed 26 investigation cases that were either unfounded or lacking a sufficient degree of evidence to substantiate the case; and forwarded 10 investigation reports to the Director of the Division of Human Resources Management for action.
- In accordance with a recommendation made by the United Nations Board of Auditors, a comprehensive review of UNHCR's investigation function was carried out by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) in December 2013. UNHCR expects to receive the final report by the end of March 2014.
- The Service organized a regional investigation workshop for selected non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Pakistan and Afghanistan in Islamabad in October 2013. The workshop focused on the obligation of implementing partners to investigate all allegations of misconduct relating to their staff and provided practical tools on how to investigate such allegations. Using this workshop as a precedent, similar regional workshops are planned for 2014 in Africa and the Middle East.
- An advanced Investigation Learning Programme was held in Geneva in December 2013. Senior Investigations Officers/Specialists, as well as senior colleagues from both headquarters and field offices who could be called upon to assist the IGO with investigations, attended this four-day training.
- Investigation missions were undertaken to three countries in sub-Saharan Africa; two countries in the Middle East and North Africa region; one country in South Asia; and one country in Latin America.
- Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for case referrals and for the sharing of sensitive information were finalized and sent to partners, along with terms of reference for joint investigation missions.
- A resource manual on investigations, designed for UNHCR's implementing partners, was also posted on the UNHCR website. This manual encompasses policies, guidelines, best practices and SOPs from a wide variety of stakeholders, including UNHCR.

---