

PROGRAMME PRESENCE OFFICE REVIEW

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT  
UN WOMEN PROGRAMME PRESENCE  
OFFICE IN MYANMAR



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PROGRAMME PRESENCE OFFICE  
IN MYANMAR



**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION AND AUDIT SERVICES (IEAS)**

Internal Audit Service (IAS)

UN WOMEN

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Audit objective and scope

The UN Women Internal Audit Service (IAS) of the Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS) conducted a limited scope audit of the UN Women Programme Presence Office (PPO) in Myanmar (the Office) from May to July 2019, with a field visit to the Office from 17 to 21 June 2019. This engagement was a supplementary review to the risk-based internal audit of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP), which at the time of audit oversaw the PPO. The review took place as the PPO was in transition to become a fully-fledged Country Office (CO). The transition was completed in September 2019.

The main objectives of the review were to assess if the PPO in Myanmar:

- receives adequate, accurate and timely support from ROAP; and
- has the structure, resources and controls to identify strategic priorities, develop and implement its field programme and planned activities, and monitor performance.

As the Office was in transition from a PPO to a CO, the scope of the review focused on strategic planning, programming and governance arrangements rather than a review of operations, i.e. the controls and processes behind operations were subject to change as soon as the Country Representative received a full Delegation of Authority (DoA). This targeted focus was based on the justification for creating a CO: that a greater UN Women presence in Myanmar was needed to reflect the growing importance of gender equity issues in the country and the significance attached to this work by resource partners.

The review covered the state of governance, risk management and internal controls based on a sample of Office activities from 1 January 2018 to 31 May 2019.

IAS followed the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* in conducting this limited scope review.

## Audit opinion and overall audit rating

IAS assessed the state of governance, risk management and internal controls in the PPO as **Some Improvement Needed** meaning that *“the assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices and controls were generally established and functioning, but need some improvement. Issues identified by the audit do not significantly affect the achievement of the objectives of the audited entity/area.”* The primary reason for this assessment was that the PPO had some areas for further improvement and inherent risks to mitigate to effectively complete the transition from a PPO to a CO. Several recommendations are forward looking and identify actions required to fulfill the responsibilities of a CO.

Governance, risk management and compliance with controls in the PPO were found to be satisfactory overall in the areas of: coordination of gender mainstreaming; programme planning and implementation; overall control environment; progress on the oversight report recommendations; and safety and security.

A good practice was noted that could be considered for replication by other offices with joint programmes. The PPO had developed a joint monitoring programme with UNDP for use in a project in Rakhine State. The joint monitoring scheme, when fully used, will provide efficiencies to the joint partners and will present a consolidated view of performance. A donor informed IAS that they welcomed the joint effort.

The overall assessment of Some Improvement Needed was mainly due to improvements needed in:

- **Strategic priorities, programme planning and implementation:** ensuring that stakeholders and staff are kept abreast of the transition and evolving presence of UN Women; improving the approach to resource mobilization; developing a results-based monitoring function to assess performance; and consolidating programme management practices.
- **Governance, risk management and internal controls:** optimizing the UN Women organizational structure in the country (to factor in cost and other criteria); aligning staff resources to programme management and office presence needs; and improving risk management.

- **Operations:** expediting recruitment of vacant positions required for a CO; and developing processes and procedures for Implementing Partner (IP) selection, procurement, travel management, document storage, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) support.

IAS made 11 recommendations to address the above areas for improvement, four of which are ranked high priority and seven medium priority.

The four high (critical) priority recommendations mean *“prompt action is required to ensure that UN Women is not exposed to high risks. Failure to take action could result in major negative consequences for UN Women.”*

The four high priority recommendations are related to addressing the following issues:

- Ensuring awareness of PPO transition and the evolving UN Women presence in the country, the Representative to use an inclusive Strategic Note (SN) mid-term review to: (a) build staff ownership of the country vision and programme priorities; and (b) build stakeholder awareness and country programme support.
- Improving the resource mobilization approach, the Representative to build on the existing resource mobilization plan to formulate the middle-term strategy, finalizing steps such as mapping key priorities with donor strategies and developing concept notes for presentation to donors. The strategy should be regularly monitored for effectiveness and updated accordingly.
- Managing the transition from PPO to CO, the Representative to design and adopt a monitoring function and responsibilities for the office, and designate a Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) focal point to coordinate the effort.
- Assessing and monitoring the cost of the field

presence, the Representative to identify operating costs (common costs, field offices, etc.), and compare and monitor to known resources and address funding gaps.

Further to the high priority recommendations, IAS made seven medium (important) priority recommendations, meaning *“action is required to ensure that UN Women is not exposed to risks. Failure to take action could result in negative consequences for UN Women.”* These recommendations focused on advocacy and communications, programme management, organizational structure, risk management and operations.

## Management comments and action plan

The Representative and ROAP accepted all recommendations with a few clarifications. The Representative and ROAP are already in the process of implementing the recommendations and provided their action plan in this report.

IAS requested comments on the detailed findings from the Representative and ROAP. The comments and/or additional information provided have been incorporated in the report, where appropriate.

Low priority issues are not included in this report, but were discussed directly with management and actions have been initiated to address them.



Lisa Sutton, Director  
**Independent Evaluation and Audit Services**

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AWP</b>	Annual Work Plan
<b>CIPS</b>	Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply
<b>CO</b>	Country Office
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>DoA</b>	Delegation of Authority
<b>DRF</b>	Development Results Framework
<b>ERM</b>	Enterprise Risk Management
<b>IAS</b>	Internal Audit Service
<b>IB</b>	Institutional Budget
<b>ICF</b>	Internal Control Framework
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>IEAS</b>	Independent Evaluation and Audit Services
<b>IP</b>	Implementing Partner
<b>LTA</b>	Long-Term Agreement
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring & Evaluation
<b>OEEF</b>	Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness Framework
<b>PPO</b>	Programme Presence Office
<b>RMS</b>	Results Management System
<b>ROAP</b>	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
<b>SN</b>	Strategic Note
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNSDCF</b>	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
<b>US\$</b>	United States dollar

## I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### About the Programme Presence Office

UN Women has had a project office in Myanmar since 2013 under the direct management of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP). In 2018, ROAP initiated steps to transition the Programme Presence Office (PPO) in Myanmar to a fully-fledged Country Office (CO). The Country Representative in Myanmar was appointed in March 2019. ROAP transferred the relevant responsibilities and delegated authorities to the Myanmar CO in September 2019.

The Office is collocated in the UNICEF compound in Yangon. Its sub-offices are positioned in Nay Pyi Daw (country capital), Rakhine State, Kachin State and Mon State.

### Facts and Statistics

As of September 2019, the Office employed 4 international staff, 7 national staff and 11 other personnel. In addition, three international staff posts were vacant. Two positions were funded by Institutional Budget (IB), three by Extra-Budgetary and three by core funding, two directly through UN Volunteer funding, while the remaining 15 positions were funded by non-core (project) funds.

Office budget and expenditure are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Office budget and expenditure, US\$

	2018	2019 (data as of 21 October 2019)
DRF budget target	3,101,938	4,276,359
DRF actual budget	2,380,323	4,124,158
DRF expenditure	2,320,368	1,576,989
OEEF budget target	551,000	883,306
OEEF actual budget	932,570	1,036,149
OEEF expenditure	534,925	409,812

Source: Results Management System (RMS) data

As of 30 November 2019, the country field programme 2018–2019 comprised seven non-core funded projects with a total budget of US\$ 5.5 million.

The first Strategic Note (SN) for 2019–2021 was developed with the assistance of ROAP and focused on three priorities including: (i) participation in the governance systems; (ii) secured income, decent work and economic autonomy; and (iii) women’s contribution in building peace and resilience including natural disasters and humanitarian crisis.

The resource mobilization target to deliver the SN was US\$ 17 million; as of September 2019, US\$ 6.2 million had already been secured, US\$ 0.9 million in hard pipeline and US\$ 5.2 million in soft pipeline, leaving US\$ 4.7 million as a target to be mobilized during 2019–2021.

Atlas-recorded expenditure for the Office (approved by ROAP or at headquarters level) totalled US\$ 2.0 million in 2018 and US\$ 3.1 million from January to August 2019. Overall, this consisted of: staff costs (20 per cent); non-staff and consultancy costs (30 per cent); maintenance, utilities and common services (15 per cent); training activities (14 per cent); procurement (12 per cent); and travel (9 per cent). Thirty per cent of this expenditure was incurred by the selected Implementing Partners.

## II. AUDIT RESULTS

### A. Strategic priorities, programme planning and implementation

The SN was the first for the Office and covered the period 2019–2021. In 2018, ROAP was instrumental in convening meetings with UN agencies, government, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and donor stakeholders to develop the SN. A resource mobilization plan was included in the SN.

The PPO's work on coordination of gender mainstreaming, programme planning (including efforts developing the first SN and for resource mobilization) and implementation was satisfactory overall. As the PPO transitioned to a fully-fledged CO, advocacy and communication, resource mobilization and project monitoring needed some improvement. Therefore, the section below includes the following forward-looking recommendations:

- personnel's awareness of their role in the transition;
- communicating with external stakeholders about the Office's strategic priorities in the country;
- resource mobilization strategy; and
- the overall monitoring of priorities and projects.

IAS also advises that as part of the Office's coordination mandate, the Representative continue efforts in advocating for gender mainstreaming in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), through the incoming UN Country Team (UNCT) Gender Scorecard assessment and related plan of action. The Office would benefit from outlining its coordination strategy, including components such as the Gender Thematic Group, liaison with CSOs and the government.

### KEY ISSUES AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Issue 1: Ensuring awareness of the Office transition and evolving UN Women presence

The role and responsibilities of the UN Women office in Myanmar were changing as it moved from a PPO to a fully-fledged CO, with full transition taking place in September 2019. To support the transition, two managers joined the Office: the Representative in March 2019 and the Operations Manager in June 2019. Both managers had prior experience in UN Women and understood the Myanmar office's new role and responsibilities. Until the arrival of the new managers, the PPO had consisted of individual programmes under the direction of an Officer in Charge. All but three staff joined the Office from mid-2017 and nearly all were linked to a specific programme responsibility. Several programme staff understood the PPO was moving towards CO status, but they were unsure what the transition meant for their role and responsibilities.

#### Recommendation 1 (Medium):

The Representative to ensure that personnel are aware of the status of the PPO's transition to a CO and the implications for their roles and responsibilities.

The UN agencies and resource partners interviewed by IAS welcomed the expanded presence of UN Women to a CO. These stakeholders expected UN Women to have more credibility in filling development gaps in gender mainstreaming because CO status implies greater stability of presence in Myanmar. The stakeholders stated that there were many gaps in gender work that UN Women could address, but they also cautioned against being overambitious and losing focus and expertise.

While the stakeholders acknowledged the increased visibility of UN Women in Myanmar over the past year, they were not aware of UN Women's strategy and its overall country programme.

The Representative had planned a mid-term revision of the SN in late 2019/early 2020 to refocus strategic priorities towards a CO perspective. To reduce duplication and excessively detailed activities from multiple projects in the SN and Annual Work Plan (AWP), the Representative planned to simplify the SN into a programmatic approach with fewer activities. An inclusive revision process could provide stakeholders with a strategic vision of UN Women in Myanmar.

#### Recommendation 2 (High):

The Representative to use an inclusive SN mid-term review as an awareness raising process to:



- Build staff ownership of the country vision and programme.
- Build external stakeholder awareness and programme support.

## Issue 2: Improving the approach to resource mobilization

A resource mobilization plan was embedded in the Office's SN. The plan was revised in May 2019 to realign resources in strategic areas. The revised plan for the three-year period required total funding of US\$ 17 million. There was a funding gap of US\$ 10 million, including US\$ 5.2 million in soft pipeline. The plan suggested that the Office wanted to secure direct funding for a Myanmar flagship programme and seek joint programming opportunities.

While the SN contained a resource mobilization plan, this did not constitute a strategy. The section in the SN identified key resource elements without laying out the steps for mobilizing the resources.

Donors and UN partners agreed that joint programming offered more opportunities for UN Women. One donor indicated that it would only support joint programmes involving UN agencies and would not consider separate projects by agency.

### Recommendation 3 (High):

The Representative to build on the existing resource mobilization plan to formulate the middle-term strategy, finalizing steps such as mapping key priorities with donor strategies and developing concept notes for presentation to donors. The strategy should be regularly monitored for effectiveness and updated accordingly.

## Issue 3: Developing a monitoring function

As a PPO, the Office had not yet adopted a monitoring function and had not identified a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) focal point or a dedicated M&E coordinator. The function is a requirement now when the PPO became a CO. Programme Officers collected monitoring data and submitted it to a UN Volunteer who assembled the inputs into quarterly reports. The ROAP Monitoring and Reporting Unit (responsible for the monitoring function on behalf of all PPOs in the region), expected the new CO to assume most of the monitoring

responsibilities.

Until the Myanmar PPO made the transition to a CO, the ROAP Monitoring and Reporting Unit continued to play a direct role in supporting the Office's monitoring and reporting requirements. As the capacity of the Myanmar CO builds, it will acquire the direct M&E responsibilities, while ROAP will perform oversight of monitoring and reporting as part of its responsibilities for all offices in the region.

The Representative understood the importance of a monitoring function and its role in ensuring that performance results were timely, accurate and relevant.

In the transition phase to a CO, the PPO had not yet consolidated recommendations from project monitoring reports, final reports, lessons learned and other oversight recommendations. Without a central repository of recommendations and lessons learned, there is a risk that project proposals overlook potential issues that could affect implementation.

PPO management was making progress in implementing the SN and AWP, and reporting results in its Quarterly and Annual Reports in the relevant corporate systems. However, the Office could improve the monitoring of its AWP through enhancing the collection and validation of evidence-based data, focusing on the results achieved rather than activities.

IAS did not see sufficient evidence that monitoring activities were being routinely performed in a way that adequately covers all programmatic areas. In particular, the current Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Plan did not always include monitoring activities to cover specific partners, or acknowledge the gaps in partner capacity assessments. This mainly occurred due to the lack of leadership presence in the Office in 2017 and early 2018, as well as insufficient resources in the Programme Unit.

### Recommendation 4 (High):

As part of managing the transition from a PPO to a CO, the Representative to:

- Design and adopt a monitoring function, responsibilities, and data collection and validation processes for the Office.
- Designate an M&E focal point to coordinate monitoring efforts, considering pooling of funds for the position.

As part of implementation of Recommendation 4, IAS

advises that the Representative *create a central repository of lessons learned, project monitoring recommendations and other recommendations (audit and evaluation) to use as a reference point for planning new programmes.*

#### **Issue 4: Improving field project management**

The Representative and ROAP jointly participated in managing and monitoring the field project portfolio. The Representative began holding weekly Programme Unit meetings in March 2019 to discuss project status and updates, as well as holding individual meetings with project managers to resolve implementation issues. In addition, ROAP provided monthly project budget status reports for each office to show planned and actual expenditure.

As the PPO made the transition to a CO, management oversight of the portfolio from a programme perspective was somewhat new. Thus far, the Office had used mixed tools for oversight. Financial status of the portfolio and individual projects was available from the monthly budget monitoring reports, but performance monitoring and reporting relied on each project's formats and schedules.

Prior to the arrival of the Representative, overall programme management and coordination at the country level was reportedly effective, though informal. ROAP exercised oversight of projects in more detail, including the management of monitoring and reporting requirements.

To facilitate project portfolio management and oversight at the country level, the Representative was considering tools that would consolidate and summarize project performance and reporting requirements. Consolidation into a standard programme management monitoring tool, rather than separate project reviews, would facilitate programme management and oversight.

#### **Recommendation 5 (Medium):**

The Representative to adopt a programme management monitoring tool and schedule that will enable the Office to monitor and manage the entire portfolio, including regular updates on programmatic and financial delivery and project risks.

## **B. Governance, risk management and internal controls**

The upgrade of the Myanmar PPO to a CO was reflected in the growth of its programme and presence. The programme budget rose from US\$ 0.7 million in 2017 to US\$ 5.2 million in 2019. During the same period, office staffing rose from three personnel in mid-2017 to 25 personnel at the time of the audit. In March 2019, the Office received its first Country Representative.

As of September 2019, the Office had a Country Representative, 17 programme posts and seven operations posts. Three of the programme posts were vacant. The Internal Control Framework (ICF) for Myanmar (as of May 2019) showed that posts with delegated authority rested in ROAP. In September 2019, such authorities were transferred to the CO.

The audit reviewed several subareas related to the organizational structure, risk management, control environment and state of internal controls. The PPO's overall control environment, including controls over prior year audit recommendations were satisfactory. Noting the PPO's transition to a fully-fledged CO, the areas that needed further improvements related to: organizational structure; risk management; internal control system; and data quality, as reported in this and the following section.

### **KEY ISSUES AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Issue 5: Assessing the cost of UN Women presence in the country**

The UN Women presence in Myanmar was spread across five offices, with three offices (Kachin, Rakhine and Mon States) supported entirely by non-core funds. Donors reportedly expected UN Women to have a presence in programme areas as a condition of funding.

The operating costs of this structure were unknown and were being compiled as the structure was rolled-out. Reportedly, the three programme offices will continue to rely solely on non-core funds and will be closed if those funds are not available. The funding for the Yangon head office was covered by IB funds, but the funding source for an expanded Nay Pyi Daw office was uncertain. The Nay Pyi Daw office in the capital served as the direct link with the government counterpart. The UNCT was planning a gradual relocation of all agencies to Nay Pyi Daw, as requested by the government, but no time frame had been set.

The rapid growth in programme occurred before the PPO had an opportunity to identify the full operating costs for a multi-office structure. However, ROAP stated that it had prepared the required justifications for the PPO's suboffices. With the creation of the Myanmar CO in 2019, the Office must comply with the 'Policy for Establishing UN Women Suboffice(s) Outside the Country Office' (May 2017). The Policy stipulates that a CO should provide the Regional Office with a justification for the continued functioning of a suboffice on an annual basis, including a detailed budget to show the suboffice's financial viability to ensure that it does not place any

additional financial burden on UN Women core resources.

In addition, cost sharing and common services had not been analysed for their impact on Office operations. In 2018, UN Women paid approximately US\$ 15,000 to UNDP, but this was set to increase in 2019 as the Office grew.

#### **Recommendation 6 (High):**

The Representative to assess, justify and periodically monitor the structural costs of UN Women's presence in the country, including:

- Operating costs.
- The criteria for creating programme offices.

#### **Issue 6: Adapting staff resources to programme management and office presence needs**

The PPO did not have management capacity to easily and efficiently fulfill the need for a presence in Nay Pyi Daw. There were frequent meetings with the government at short notice, where UN officials had to make last-minute travel arrangements. This led to frequent travel from Yangon to Nay Pyi Daw. The Office lacked a post in the capital that would provide a direct backup to the Representative when UN Women needed a concurrent presence in Yangon (where donors were located) and Nay Pyi Daw. Other UN agencies were proposing Deputy posts to bridge the gap.

In order to manage the programme portfolio and ensure good coordination with all stakeholders, originally the Representative had proposed a new Senior Programme

Manager post; the Representative then reported that ROAP had agreed to create a Deputy Representative post, but this decision awaited final approval. However, as a backup to the Representative to be placed in Nay Pyi Daw, this post would require additional Delegations of Authority (DoA).

### **Recommendation 7 (Medium):**

The Representative to consult with ROAP on:

- Cost-efficient mechanisms to strengthen programme capacity and facilitate programme development and implementation.
- Appropriate DoA for staff when dual management presence is required in Yangon and Nay Pyi Daw.

### **Issue 7: Enhancing risk management**

The four projects IAS selected for review had different approaches to identifying project risks. However, none of

the project records linked risks to the broader risk register in the PPO's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) database. Ideally, activity-level risk management should show awareness of higher-level risks. Without project references to the Office's ERM register, there is limited assurance that higher-level risks are considered in project planning and that project risks are consolidated and visible in the ERM risk register. In addition, the Office's fraud risk assessment, while in process, had not yet been finalized.

### **Recommendation 8 (Medium):**

The Representative to strengthen risk management relating to:

- Fraud risks, systematic monitoring and updates of risk mitigation actions.
- Integration of risk data in the Office's ERM register.

## C. Operations

At the time of the audit mission, operational authority rested with ROAP, as illustrated in the May 2019 ICF. However, with the recruitment of the new Representative and Operations Manager, the PPO began taking steps towards the transition to a CO. Specifically, the Representative adopted a new organization chart that showed posts for key functions in the Operations Unit. Three operations posts – Procurement Assistant, Human Resources Assistant and Finance Assistant – were vacant but were filled after the audit mission.

PPO and ROAP managers were jointly working on a smooth transition of operational responsibilities to the Myanmar Office. At the time of the audit mission, ROAP had planned orientation and training for new staff on their responsibilities and delegated authority. The Myanmar Operations Manager was developing several functional Standard Operating Procedures for the Operations Unit. In September 2019, full delegated authority was transferred to the Myanmar CO.

IAS did not offer conclusions in most operational areas as the transition was incomplete at the time of the audit. However, special attention was required in three areas: (i) selection process for Implementing Partners (IPs); (ii) the vendor selection process for procurement; and (iii) ICT support.

## KEY ISSUES AND CONCLUSIONS

### **Issue 8: Selection process for Implementing Partners**

The PPO and ROAP shared duties related to the selection of implementation modalities and IPs. Programme staff in Myanmar initiated requests for actions, such as recruiting consultants or developing Calls for Proposals, but full responsibility and approval to proceed rested with ROAP. Files indicated extensive exchanges between offices to facilitate the actions.

Documenting the selection process was also performed jointly. However, the PPO did not yet have a standard procedure for maintaining important records of the selection process, such as the process of advertising Calls for Proposals; the number of proposals received; the technical criteria; and the evaluation.

#### **Recommendation 9 (Medium):**

The Representative to:

- Develop standard procedures for selecting implementation modalities, particularly for IPs.
- Request assistance from ROAP to build staff capacity on managing the IP selection process.
- Create a standard document storage scheme for IP selection.

### **Issue 9: Strengthening the procurement process**

The PPO and ROAP jointly managed procurement. Programme staff in the PPO initiated procurement requests for approval by ROAP. After approval, the PPO Administrative Assistant handled the vendor selection process, obtaining direct quotations for small purchases or requesting written quotations for larger purchases. The Administrative Assistant relied on advice from UNDP, UNICEF and ROAP in managing procurement actions. ROAP held the delegated authority for approving procurement actions.

The PPO relied heavily on the use of Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) adopted by other agencies or on suggestions of potential vendors by other agencies as it lacked the procurement staff to identify a range of qualified vendors or manage procurement actions. While ROAP strongly encouraged the use of LTAs to streamline procurement, IAS believes that after the Office develops sufficient procurement capacity, these LTAs could be revisited to ensure their cost-effectiveness.

#### **Recommendation 10 (Medium):**

After developing sufficient procurement capacity, the Representative to conduct market research to create a vendor database, examine the vendor selection process and use of LTAs to meet procurement needs.

## Issue 10: Managing ICT Support

ROAP managed ICT functions, particularly access to systems, data security and disaster recovery. The ICT Coordinator in ROAP worked with the Operations Manager in Myanmar on a transition of responsibilities.

The PPO did not have staff for local ICT support. Through an informal agreement with UNICEF, which was collocated in the same compound, UNICEF ICT support provided assistance to UN Women at no cost. UNICEF used a private vendor for its ICT support.

The Representative and Operations Manager were considering the best means for managing ICT resources.

They believed the Office did not require a dedicated ICT staff post and were considering other options, such as continued assistance from ROAP or supplemental support from UNICEF.

### Recommendation 11 (Medium):

The Representative to consult with the Information System Security Officer in headquarters and ROAP on ICT support requirements.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Issue	Recommendation	Process	Responsible Unit	Priority	Action Plan	Implementation date
1: Ensuring awareness of the Office transition and evolving UN Women presence	1. The Representative to ensure that personnel are aware of the status of the PPO's transition to a CO and the implications for their roles and responsibilities.	Advocacy and communications	Myanmar CO	Medium	<p>The Myanmar Country Office obtained its delegation of authority in September 2019. The news and its implications were shared with all staff during an all-staff meeting, and individual delegations of authority clearly highlighting the new roles and responsibilities were issued to all staff members included in the ICF accordingly.</p> <p>It is important to highlight that during the audit period, the Myanmar office was still a PPO, and communication about roles and responsibilities for a Country Office were to be done at an appropriate time, when the ICF for the new office was finalized and made available to all as indicated above.</p>	Completed.
	<p>2. The Representative to use an inclusive SN mid-term review as an awareness raising process to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build staff ownership of the country vision and programme.</li> <li>• Build external stakeholder awareness and programme support.</li> </ul>	Advocacy and communications	Myanmar CO	High	<p>The Myanmar Country Office will organize a consultative review of the SN during the second half of 2020, to lead to a revised SN to be approved by end of 2020, as part of the annual work planning process.</p> <p>In the meantime, the Country Representative will continue to hold bilateral and group briefings with development partners (such briefings have taken place already with multiple partners) to build their awareness of the UN Women Strategic Plan and use public events linked to UN Women programming for the same purpose.</p>	December 2020 for SN review and ongoing for external stakeholder awareness.
2: Improving the approach to resource mobilization	3. The Representative to build on the existing resource mobilization plan to formulate the middle-term strategy, finalizing steps such as mapping key priorities with donor strategies and developing concept notes for presentation	Strategy and resource mobilization	Myanmar CO	High	<p>As a PPO, Myanmar, mobilized over USD 8 million between the end of 2017 and the time of the audit in the middle of 2019. This is a notable result considering the expectations, structures and corporate investment for a PPO and exceeded performance of a number of COs around the world. The resource mobilization of the PPO was guided by a resource mobilization plan, itself</p>	31 March 2020.

	to donors. The strategy should be regularly monitored for effectiveness and updated accordingly.				informed by a Myanmar specific donor mapping developed by ROAP. The Myanmar Country Office will build upon this work to further strengthen its resource mobilization capacity and harness the momentum caused by its transition to a fully-fledged status by developing an additional resource mobilization strategy for the entire length of its Strategic Note, linking specific efforts under each impact area with donor profiles. This strategy will be updated as necessary.	
3. Developing a monitoring function	<p>4. As part of managing the transition from a PPO to a CO, the Representative to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and adopt a monitoring function, responsibilities, and data collection and validation processes for the Office.</li> <li>• Designate an M&amp;E focal point to coordinate monitoring efforts, considering pooling of funds for the position.</li> </ul>	SN and AWP implementation	Myanmar CO	High	<p>All projects under the portfolio of the Myanmar Country Office have an M&amp;E framework. Under its 2020 AWP, the Country Office will ensure that responsibilities for monitoring of results at a Strategic Note/programmatic level between project managers are clarified and mapped.</p> <p>The Country Office will continue efforts to include cost-recovery funding for an M&amp;E specialist position under new project proposals and agreements with donors.</p> <p>In the meantime, the role of M&amp;E focal point will be given to the Programme Management Specialist currently under recruitment.</p> <p>We also wish to highlight that, whilst the recommendation is forward looking, it however gives the impression that there was an expectation that the Myanmar PPO should have had a dedicated monitoring function. As highlighted in the detailed findings, there was no expectation by ROAP to have that function at that stage as that function was done by ROAP.</p>	28 February 2020.
4. Improving field programme management	5. The Representative to adopt a programme management monitoring tool and schedule that will enable the Office to monitor and manage the entire portfolio, including regular updates on programmatic and financial delivery and project risks.	Programme management	Myanmar CO	Medium	The Country Office developed in August 2019 a country level programme monitoring tool combining information on current delivery and future planning. The tool is updated monthly and currently used to analyse programme performance across projects and inform corrective action. This tool is used in addition to the monthly programme financial delivery and advances to partner monitoring tables shared by ROAP.	Completed.



5. Assessing the cost of UN Women presence in the country	6. The Representative to assess, justify and periodically monitor the structural costs of UN Women's presence in the country, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Operating costs.</li><li>• The criteria for creating programme offices.</li></ul>	Organizational structure, authority, capacity and reporting lines	Myanmar CO	High	In implementation of the policy on sub-offices, the Myanmar CO will establish a business case for each sub-office, inclusive of an analysis of the operating costs and sources of funding, to be included on an annual basis in the CO Annual Work Plan for review and approval under the annual work planning process	18 December 2019 and then annually as part of annual work planning process.
6. Adapting staff resources to programme management and office presence needs	7. The Representative to consult with ROAP on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cost-efficient mechanisms to strengthen programme capacity and facilitate programme development and implementation.</li><li>• Appropriate DoA for staff when dual management presence is required in Yangon and Nay Pyi Daw.</li></ul>	Organizational structure, authority, capacity and reporting lines	Myanmar CO	Medium	Consultations with the ROAP on adapting staff resources had already taken place at the time of the audit, and it was decided that a position of international Programme Management Specialist at P4 level would be established under core funding as an interim measure to strengthen the capacity of the Myanmar Country office, while awaiting finalization of the UN Women wide Change Management Process, which will determine, in fine, whether additional IB resources will be provided to the Myanmar Country Office, in order to establish a proper position of Deputy Representative. The position of Programme Management Specialist was established in September 2019 and is currently under recruitment. Further action in terms of establishing a Deputy Representative post is contingent on broader decisions, which are out of the hands of the Country Office and the ROAP. Short of a position of Deputy Representative, extension of the Programme Management Specialist beyond 2020 will depend on core allocations from HQ to the Asia-Pacific Region.	31 December 2020 - Partially completed within the limit of authority of the ROAP and the Myanmar Country Office.
7. Enhancing risk assessment	8. The Representative to strengthen risk management relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fraud risks, systematic monitoring and updates of risk mitigation actions.</li><li>• Integration of risk data in the Office's ERM register.</li></ul>	Risk management	Myanmar CO	Medium	The Myanmar Country Office rolled out a fraud training for all of its staff in 2019 and ensured 100 per cent completion of the online fraud mandatory training by its staff.  The Myanmar Country Office further uploaded its risk data in the UN Women ERM online register. The risk matrix and register will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by the programme and operation team and will be updated as needed.	Completed for integrating risk register in ERM.  31 March 2020 for integrating fraud risks into risk register and establishing

						systematic monitoring and updates of risk mitigation actions.
8. Selection process for Implementing Partners	<p>9. The Representative to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop standard procedures for selecting implementation modalities, particularly for IPs.</li> <li>• Request assistance from ROAP to build staff capacity on managing the IP selection process.</li> <li>• Create a standard document storage scheme for IP selection.</li> </ul>	Implementing Partner management	Myanmar CO	Medium	<p>UN Women has corporate standard procedures for selecting implementation modalities for partners by which the Myanmar Country Office abides.</p> <p>The Country Office has requested and been receiving support from ROAP to build staff capacity on managing the IP Selection process. A programme management specialist was seconded to the Myanmar Country Office for two months to this effect in July-August 2019, and the ROAP further appointed a focal point to support the Country Office remotely in the following period. Further trainings will be provided to the office staff once the full complement of staff is on board. The Myanmar Country Office has already created SharePoint document storage systems for IP documentation at project level and will work with ROAP to use the new UN Women wide Partner Grant Agreement System for storage, once it is rolled out.</p>	Completed.
9. Strengthening the procurement process	10. After developing sufficient procurement capacity, the Representative to conduct market research to create a vendor database, examine the vendor selection process and use of LTAs to meet procurement needs.	Procurement management	Myanmar CO	Medium	The ROAP organized a procurement training for the Myanmar Country Office in September 2019, and the Country Office will send six staff members to undergo CIPS training at ROAP before end of 2019. In alignment with UN Women global approach, the Myanmar Country Office will further continue to maximize efficiencies and save resources by working through the UNCT procurement working group and piggy backing on LTA processes led by larger and more resourced organizations such as UNDP and UNICEF, wherever possible.	31 December 2019.
10. Managing ICT support	11. The Representative to consult with the Information System Security Officer in headquarters and ROAP on ICT support requirements.	ICT	Myanmar CO	Medium	At the request of the Country Office, the ROAP sent their ICT specialist for a week mission to Myanmar in September 2019. The mission led to a number of recommendations to strengthen the office ICT set-up and capacities, which are currently being implemented. These will be finalized by February 2020.	February 2020 – Ongoing.

# Annex 1: DEFINITIONS OF AUDIT TERMS, RATINGS AND PRIORITIES

## A. AUDIT RATINGS

<b>Satisfactory</b>	The assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices and controls were adequately established and functioning well. Issues identified by the audit, if any, are unlikely to affect the achievement of the objectives of the audited entity/area.
<b>Some Improvement Needed</b>	The assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices and controls were generally established and functioning, but need some improvement. Issues identified by the audit do not significantly affect the achievement of the objectives of the audited entity/area.
<b>Major Improvement Needed</b>	The assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices and controls were established and functioning, but need major improvement. Issues identified by the audit could significantly affect the achievement of the objectives of the audited entity/area.
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	The assessed governance arrangements, risk management practices and controls were either not adequately established or not functioning well. Issues identified by the audit could seriously compromise the achievement of the objectives of the audited entity/area.

## B. PRIORITIES OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

<b>High (Critical)</b>	Prompt action is required to ensure that UN Women is not exposed to high risks. Failure to take action could result in major negative consequences for UN Women.
<b>Medium (Important)</b>	Action is required to ensure that UN Women is not exposed to risks. Failure to take action could result in negative consequences for UN Women.
<b>Low</b>	Action is desirable and should result in enhanced control or better value for money. Low priority recommendations, if any, are dealt with by the audit team directly with the Country Office management, either during the exit meeting or through a separate memo subsequent to the fieldwork. Therefore, low priority recommendations are not included in this report.

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DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND THE  
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A GLOBAL  
CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, UN  
WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED TO ACCELERATE  
PROGRESS ON MEETING THEIR NEEDS  
WORLDWIDE.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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