

# **REPORT ON INTERNAL AUDIT AND INVESTIGATION ACTIVITIES**

of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2020

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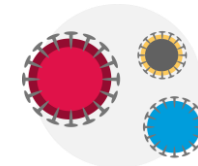
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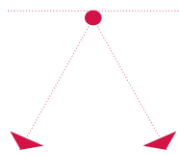
- Adjusting Internal Audit plan for 2021



# **Internal Audit function in UN Women**

# UN Women Oversight providers

## Independent Evaluation and Audit Services-IEAS



**IES**

**Evaluation**  
Impact,  
Sustainability  
Relevance

**IAS**

**Internal Audit**  
Governance  
Risks  
Controls

## Board of Auditors



**External Auditors**

**Opinion on the financial statements**

## Office of Internal Oversight Service



**Investigation of fraud and misconduct**

## Joint Inspection Unit



**Cross agencies benchmarking assessments**

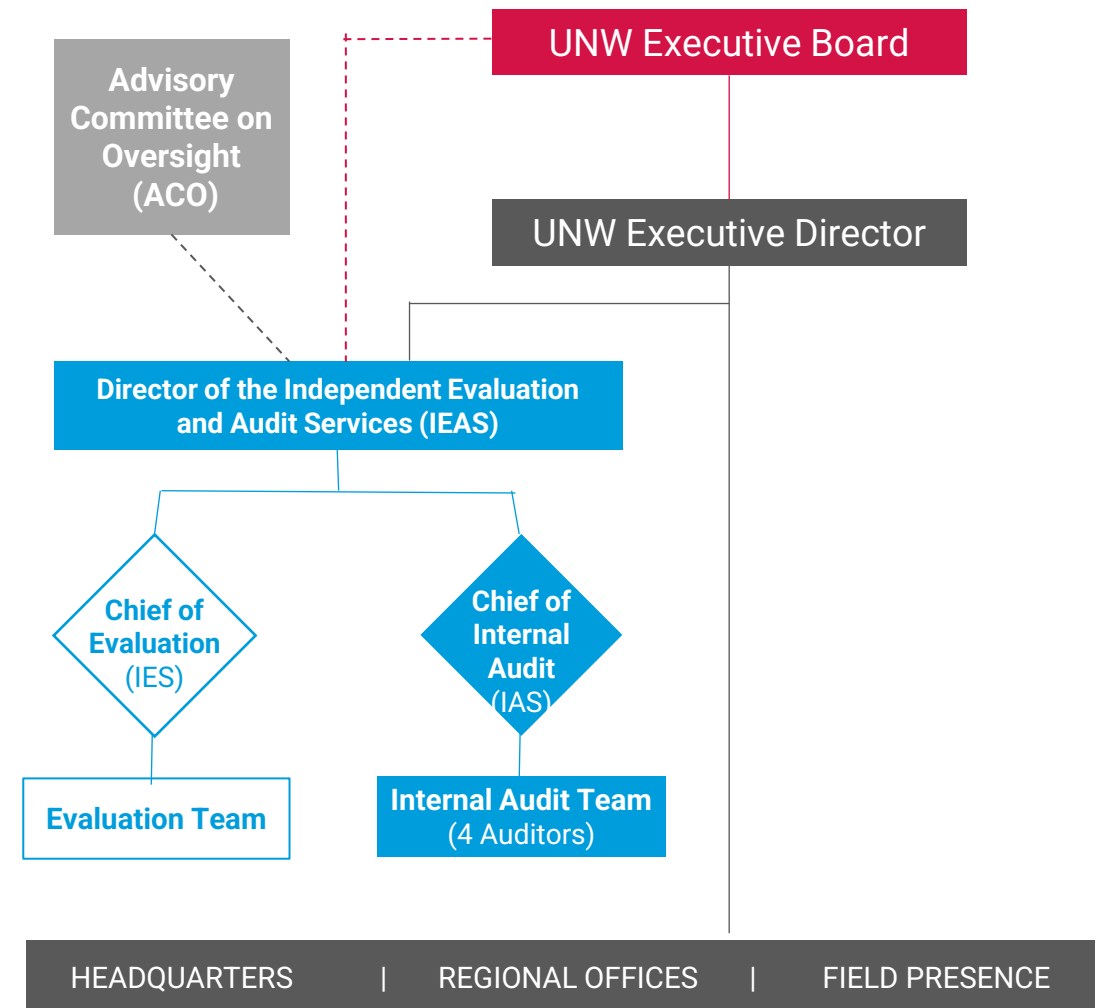
## Ethics Office



**Consult on ethical issues, and seek protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct.**

# IAS structure within UN Women

- **MANDATE:** independent and objective assurance and advisory services to add value and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of UN-Women's work
- **INDEPENDENT:** Reports directly to the Executive Director. Protections of independence through ACO.
- **AUTHORITY:** full, free, and unrestricted access to any and all records, electronic data, physical properties, and personnel
- **GOVERNED:** Charter, ACO, International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF) of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA)
- **SCOPE:** Assurance & advisory on the effectiveness of governance, risk management, and internal controls



# Investigations

## **OIOS conducts investigation for UN-Women on all possible misconduct by UN Women:**

- Personnel,
- Vendors,
- Implementing partners,
- Any other individual or entity engaged by UN Women.

UN Women has zero tolerance for fraud, corruption and any kind of wrongdoing.

Anyone with information regarding fraud, corruption or other wrongdoing relating to UN Women programmes or involving UN Women personnel should report this information through the investigation hotline:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/accountability/investigations>

or Phone: **+1 212-963-1111**  
(24 hours a day)

**2020**

# **Annual Report on Internal Audit and Investigation Activities**

# ANNUAL OVERALL OPINION

## SOME IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

IAS' overall opinion is that the Entity's governance, risk management and control processes were **generally established and functioning but needed some improvement**.

IAS notes the efforts UN-Women has made to enhance governance and risk management in 2020.

### Risks that require UN Women management attention:

- further enhance its second line of defence;
- improve management absorption capacity to implement corporate audit recommendations
- Strengthen capacity, particularly in the field, both in terms of staffing and skills
- further demonstrate its accountability for risk management and related systems of internal control through preparing an annual Statement of Internal Controls

## EVIDENCE



### AUDIT PLAN

2020 risk-based audit plan and its implementation



### AUDIT ENGAGEMENT

Individual audit and advisory engagement results and ratings



### PROGRESS MADE BY MANAGEMENT

Actions addressing audit recommendations



### UNBOA'S WORK

Work conducted by the United Nations Board of Auditors



# Summary of work



## ● Five reports were advisory

- Two lessons learned memorandums on potential control deficiencies from OIOS reports
- Ethics and Integrity Benchmarking Assessment
- Limited scope review of governance, risk and compliance processes in HeForShe
- Rapid assessment of governance of UN Women coordination

## ● Implementation of internal audit recommendations

- As of 10 May 2021 all except **17 recommendations** were closed for the period before 2020
- Management already addressed **59 per cent** of 2020 recommendations

# KEY ISSUES

- **Programme and project management:** project design, risk management, monitoring and reporting
- **Governance arrangements:** articulating vision, direction and operationalization of strategies
- **Cybersecurity, system integration and data management:** non-integrated systems, no systems for project lifecycle, enhancing cybersecurity posture
- **Effectiveness of policies and compliance:** enhancing policy cycle management, improve its compliance with policies in travel, procurement & HR
- **Capacity, structure and skills:** matching resources to priorities

Recurrent issues by number of recommendations issued in 2020



# Advisory engagements and activities

## Lessons learned from OIOS investigations

Gaps in controls were communicated for management action

## Ethics and Integrity Benchmarking Assessment:

Maturity was assessed and roadmap was prepared to enhance and advance UN-Women to higher level maturity

## Governance, Risk, and Controls in HeForShe

Limited scope review of governance, risk and compliance processes

## Rapid Assessment of Governance of UN Women coordination

Key conclusions on what is successful coordination, its effective implementation, key stakeholders to be involved.

### ACTIVITIES



Commenting on draft policies and procedures



Active observer in working groups including Covid-19



Adviser on Management Teams meetings



Regular interactions with Evaluation team



Observer in new SP development groups

# INVESTIGATIONS

49

Total allegations in 2020

31

Closed allegations in 2020

21

Carry over from 2019

10

Closed after investigation

28

Intake during 2020

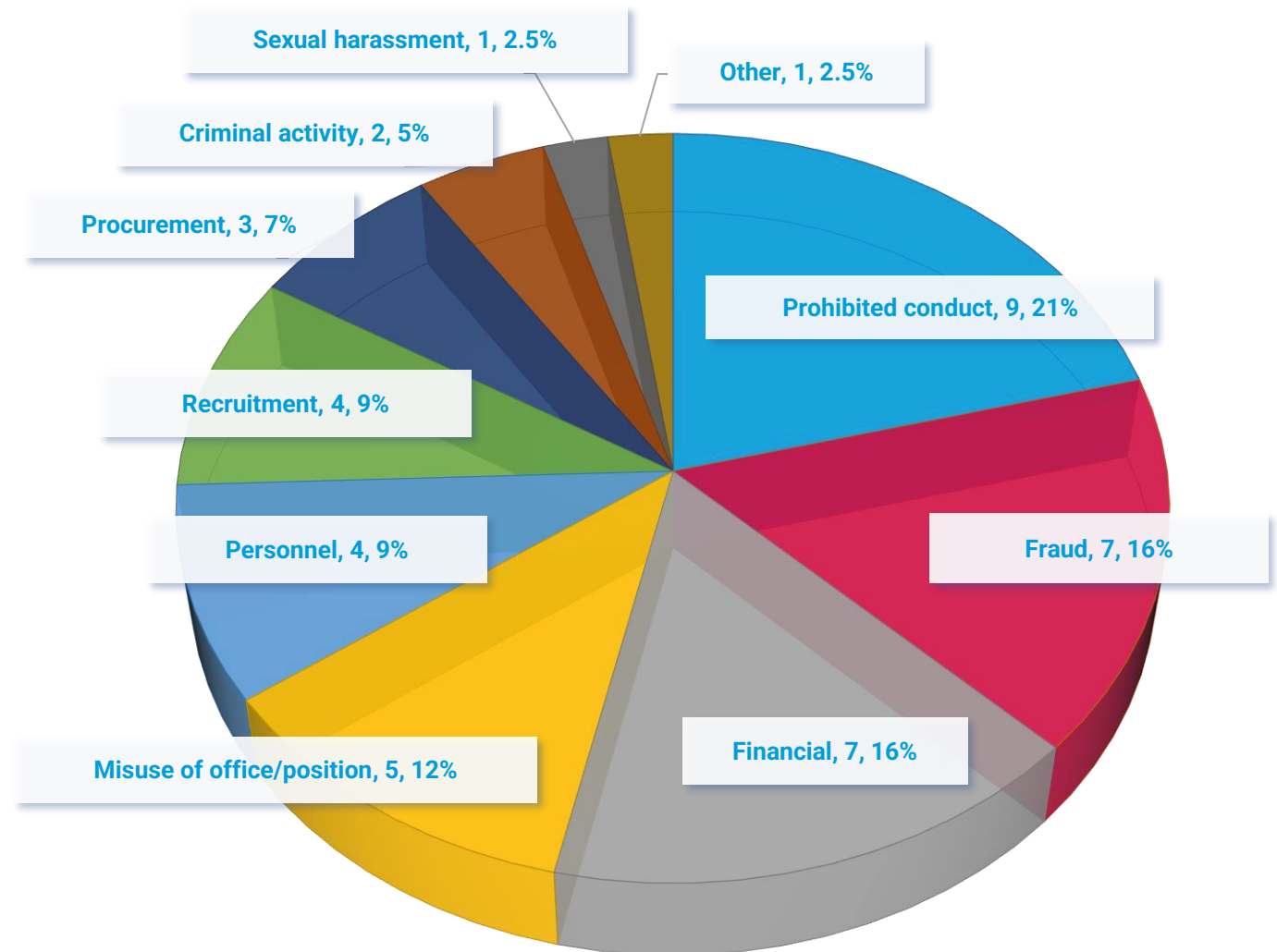
21

closed without investigation

18

Carried over into 2021

## Type of Allegations



# Investigations

10

Cases investigated & closed  
in 2020

4

substantiated

3

unsubstantiated

3

Merged with another case



## Sources of allegations

- 27 new allegations were received by OIOS via the hotline (85 per cent) or by email (15 per cent)
- Sources of allegations were undisclosed to IEAS (56 per cent), anonymous (22 per cent), UN personnel (18 per cent) or an external party (4 per cent)



## Cases carried over to 2021

- As of March 2021, 3 of the 18 allegations carried over to 2021 were closed and 15 remained under investigation
- Of the 3 allegations closed, 1 was closed after preliminary assessment and 2 were closed after investigation

# Internal Audit function in the context of **COVID-19**

# Adjusting audit plan for 2021



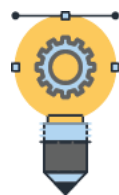
## Advocating for Gender in Audit

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications?keywords=audit>



## Remote audits

Exploring new ways to audit. Where possible, remote audits have been conducted including limited scope field audits



## Crisis management

Provide timely inputs on fast tracking policies and processes so the risks are identified and addressed



## Emerging risks

Scanning for emerging risks and proactively advising management on effective management

THANK YOU