



OIOS

Office of Internal Oversight Services

INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

AUDIT REPORT

UNHCR recruitment of national staff in the Iraqi Situation (Jordan)

**There were avoidable delays in recruiting
national staff due to the Representation's failure
to use the fast track model for recruitment**

18 November 2009

Assignment No. AR2009/131/05

United Nations  Nations Unies

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

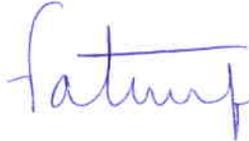
OFFICE OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT SERVICES · BUREAU DES SERVICES DE CONTRÔLE INTERNE
INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION · DIVISION DE L'AUDIT INTERNE

TO: Mr. António Guterres, High Commissioner
A: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

DATE: 18 November 2009

REFERENCE: IAD: 09- 03134

FROM: Fatoumata Ndiaye, Acting Director
DE: Internal Audit Division, OIOS



SUBJECT: **Assignment No. AR2009/131/05 - Audit of UNHCR recruitment of national staff in the Iraqi Situation (Jordan)**
OBJET: **Situation (Jordan)**

1. I am pleased to present the report on the above-mentioned audit.
2. In order for us to close the recommendations, we request that you provide us with the additional information as discussed in the text of the report and also summarized in Annex 1.
3. Your response indicated that you did not accept recommendation 10. In OIOS' opinion however, this recommendation seeks to address a significant risk area. We are therefore reiterating it and requesting that you reconsider your initial response based on the additional information provided in the report.
4. Please note that OIOS will report on the progress made to implement its recommendations, particularly those designated as high risk (i.e., recommendations 4 and 11), in its annual report to the General Assembly and semi-annual report to the Secretary-General.

cc: Mr. L. Craig Johnstone, Deputy High Commissioner, UNHCR
Mr. Imran Riza, Representative, UNHCR, Amman, Jordan
Mr. Radhouane Nouicer, Director, MENA Bureau, UNHCR
Ms. Karen Farkas, Controller and Director, DFAM, UNHCR
Ms. Maha Odeima, Audit Coordinator, UNHCR
Mr. Nicholas Birch, Audit Coordination Assistant, UNHCR
Mr. Swatantra Goolsarran, Executive Secretary, UN Board of Auditors
Ms. Susanne Frueh, Executive Secretary, Joint Inspection Unit
Mr. Moses Bamuwamye, Chief, Oversight Support Unit, Department of Management
Mr. Byung-Kun Min, Special Assistant to the USG-OIOS
Mr. Christopher Bagot, Chief, Geneva Audit Service, OIOS

INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

FUNCTION

“The Office shall, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations examine, review and appraise the use of financial resources of the United Nations in order to guarantee the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, ascertain compliance of programme managers with the financial and administrative regulations and rules, as well as with the approved recommendations of external oversight bodies, undertake management audits, reviews and surveys to improve the structure of the Organization and its responsiveness to the requirements of programmes and legislative mandates, and monitor the effectiveness of the systems of internal control of the Organization” (General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Audit of UNHCR recruitment of national staff in the Iraqi Situation (Jordan)

OIOS conducted an audit of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recruitment of national staff in the Iraqi Situation in Amman, Jordan, between 21 June and 2 July 2009. The overall objective of the audit was to determine whether an effective system of internal control is in place for recruiting national staff. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

OIOS found avoidable delays in the recruitment of national staff in UNHCR, Jordan, mainly due to the Representation's failure to use the fast track model for recruitment. The key findings were as follows:

- Despite delegation of authority for organizing local recruitment of national staff and introduction of a time-bound fast track model of deployment of staff, approximately one-third of the approved national staff posts were vacant for long periods;
- There is a need to develop and implement an annual rolling plan for recruitment of national staff, which should also be monitored and updated periodically;
- Work plans need to be established for all staff members engaged in recruitment activities, including the Unit Heads, to ensure their accountability;
- There were deficiencies in regard to compliance with the most important aspects of recruitment, namely, assessing the eligibility/suitability and physical fitness of the candidates;
- There was no evidence that the mandatory entry test was conducted for candidates short-listed for national professional officer posts;
- Personal and professional reference checks were not conducted in all cases;
- There was no specific reporting to and review by UNHCR Headquarters of the delegated authority exercised by field offices for recruitment of national staff; and
- There is a need for periodical internal monitoring and review of the recruitment operations in the UNHCR Representation in Jordan.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recruitment of national staff in the Iraqi situation between 21 June and 2 July 2009 in Amman, Jordan. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

2. As of June 2009, UNHCR Jordan Office workforce consisted of 195 personnel, nearly fifty per cent of whom were persons not administered by UNHCR, and who were referred to as non-staff personnel. The remaining individuals, around 92 staff members in position, included 27 international and 65 national staff members. National staff include National Professional Officer (NPO) and General Service (GS) categories. The approved strength of national staff for UNHCR Jordan is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: National staff positions

Date	National Staff positions		
	NPO	GS	Total
1 January 2007	3	23	26
31 December 2007	3	56	59
1 January 2008	5	60	65
1 January 2009	7	63	70

3. This report focuses on national staff. The authority for recruitment of national staff (Professional and GS) has been delegated to field offices under the Representatives' supervision. During the years, 2007 to 2009 (up to June) 50 national staff members were recruited in UNHCR Jordan for filling new and vacant posts.

4. Comments made by UNHCR are shown in *italics*.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVES

5. The main objectives of the audit were to:

- (a) Determine whether an effective system of internal control was in place for undertaking recruitment of national staff;
 - (b) Assess the efficiency and the effectiveness of the process and procedures of recruitment; and
 - (c) Assess compliance with relevant staff rules and regulations for ensuring a fair and transparent process.
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III. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The audit, which took place between 21 June and 2 July 2009, covered a review of recruitment management and the recruitments made during the years 2007 to 2009 (up to June 2009) with a detailed sample check of the recruitments.

7. The audit included analyses of data and information obtained from the management as well as those available in the Human Resources (HR) module of Management Systems Renewal Project (MSRP), interviews with key staff members, and review of documents and records in the HR Unit.

IV. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Staffing and recruitment planning

Need for detailed recruitment planning

8. As shown in Table 1 above, the number of approved national staff members has increased from 2007 to date and there have been around 50 recruitments during this period. OIOS sought to determine whether there was any detailed national staff recruitment plan drawn up for implementation during each of the years 2007 to 2009, and whether it contained the time frame for each stage of recruitment action, in order to facilitate monitoring against targets. The UNHCR Representation stated that "an overview of vacancies was undertaken". As brought out later in this report, there were delays in recruitments of generally more than six months and in some cases more than one year, despite the approval of most of the positions on the fast track model of deployment of staff. OIOS therefore is of the opinion that there should have been a rolling annual plan subject to monthly review and updating as needed on a month-to-month basis.

Recommendation 1

(1) The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should develop and adopt an annual rolling plan of recruitment of national staff, subject to monthly updating as needed, in a manner that would allow effective monitoring and control.

9. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 1 and stated that as new posts are generally in effect as of 1 January, a schedule to fill the posts is prepared once the Budget Committee decisions are received. Although the Bureau noted that sporadic vacancies continue to arise, even after more than two years of emergency operation, a monthly plan to anticipate resignations and fill posts is being developed. The Representation concurred. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of a copy of the monthly plan and clarification of the action taken with respect to annual staff planning.*

Non-establishment of annual work plan

10. The performance appraisal system of UNHCR, now known as Performance Appraisal and Management System (PAMS), requires the inclusion of the individual's work plan for the year. UNHCR Representation stated that the work relating to recruitment, which is handled by two HR staff members under the supervision of a Senior Admin/Finance Officer, has only been taken into account as a part of the performance appraisal system. To ensure accountability, a reference should be made in the performance appraisal work plans of all staff and management involved in recruitment of national staff. It is therefore necessary to specifically reflect this work in the annual work plan of all the related staff members, including the unit heads responsible for short-listing, organizing tests/interviews and presenting cases to the Appointments, Postings and Promotions Committee (APPC). Without this, there can be no enforcement of accountability.

Recommendation 2

(2) The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should establish clear work plans for all the concerned staff members engaged in recruitment activities, including the Unit Heads, and enforce their accountability as part of the performance appraisal and management system.

11. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 2 and stated that a schedule of monthly activities and focal points is being prepared with accountability of the Heads of Units to be reflected in the performance appraisal period from January 2010. The Representation concurred. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of a copy of the schedule of monthly activities and a copy of the performance appraisal including the accountability of the Heads of Units for recruitment.*

B. Recruitment procedures and processes

Delays in recruitment

12. The following table shows the national staff positions that were vacant as at 1 January 2008 and 1 January 2009, representing approximately one-third of the total approved national staff positions:

Table 2: Vacant national staff positions

Category	Vacant positions	
	1 January 2008	1 January 2009
NPO	4	5
GS	18	18
Total	22	23

13. According to paragraph 4 of the APPC Procedural Regulations of June 2006, all vacant posts should first be advertised internally and as soon as possible

but no later than two months of creation or otherwise becoming vacant. The average duration of the vacancies in Table 2 was between six months and one year. In addition, there was non-compliance with paragraph 15 of UNHCR IOM 31/FOM 33 of 9 May 2008 which states that fast track positions should be filled within two months of advertisement. Some of the positions took over six months to fill (see Table 3). The total delay for some posts was in excess of a year, which defeats the objective of having recruitment of fast track positions under local control.

Table 3: Delay in recruitment

Position	Title	Vacancy Advertisement	Recruit's ID	Entry on Duty	Delay
10014353	Assistant Resettlement Officer	7/12/2008	10006429	1/6/2009	6 months
10011676	Senior Protection Clerk	9/2/2008	Vacant	Vacant	16 months
10011922	Senior Protection Clerk	9/2/2008	10025405	1/1/2009	10 months
10013234	Senior Programme Clerk	9/2/2008	10024631	1/1/2009	10 months
10011921	Senior Field Safety Clerk	14/2/2007	10023334	1/7/2008	17 months
10013227	Assistant Protection Officer	21/9/2008	10023802	1/4/2009	6 months
10014354	Assistant Registration Officer	7/12/2008	10014937	1/6/2009	6 months

Recommendation 3

(3) The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should examine the causes for recruitment delays and put in place mechanisms to avoid such delays and ensure prompt vacancy announcements in the future.

14. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 3 and stated that electronic vacancy management under a joint UN project will be started as of October 2009 to provide human resource assistance in all aspects of vacancy management including a consistent and wider audience at an economical rate, standard short-listing by qualifications and electronic file management. The Representation concurred. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of information regarding the implementation of the mechanisms put in place to reduce recruitment delays.*

Non-implementation of fast track model of recruitment

15. UNHCR IOM 71/FOM 67 of 4 December 2002 announced the introduction of fast track model for the deployment of staff, including National

Officer and GS positions in the field, in all supplementary programmes and for emergency operations foreseen to last at least 12 months. The IOM/FOM laid down a time table for the advertisement and appointment for Professional, Field Service, and National Officer positions. Where the GS positions were included in the fast track, the time table was to be determined by the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Bureau and the Division of Human Resource Management (DHRM). UNHCR Jordan informed OIOS that it did not receive a specific time table from MENA or DHRM.

16. The subsequent IOM 31/FOM 33 issued on 9 May 2008 stated that “the Fast Track model will continue to be used for all Supplementary Budget Programmes (SBs) and emergency operations foreseen to last at least 12 months, including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) operations”. It was made clear that “those standard functions which are budgeted for one year or more will normally be Temporary positions for ‘fast tracking’ via the Appointments, Postings and Promotions Board and, Appointments, Postings and Promotions Committee.” It was stressed that “by virtue of being part of an SB or an emergency operation, the filling of a Fast Track position within two months from the date of advertisement is a priority”.

17. Table 2 shows the number of posts relating to UNHCR Jordan that should have been filled under the fast track model. Although fast track had been allowed, the Representation was not aware of the timetable and had not undertaken any recruitment under the fast track route.

Table 4: Approved fast track positions

Date	Category		Total
	NPO	GS	
1 January 2007	1	13	14
31 December 2007	2	45	47
1 January 2008	4	50	54
1 January 2009	6	51	57

Recommendation 4

(4) The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should put in place procedures to ensure that the fast track model of recruitment of national staff is followed for future recruitment.

18. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 4. It was stated that as improving the Fast Track Model for the Deployment of Staff (ref IOM/031/FOM/033 dated 09 May 2008) is largely geared towards international deployments of staff, and as Professional and NPO staff appointed to Jordan since 2008 are no longer under the Fast Track model, the model is no longer applicable to Jordan. Further, as indicated by the Bureau, the creation of posts for the Iraq Operation was presented on an interim basis in addition to the annual Budget Committee (BC) meeting with one interim BC meeting in April 2009 and the annual presentation of new posts in the Prioritized Plan in July*

2009 of which results are expected in October. The Representation concurred. OIOS takes note of the additional information. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of documentation explaining why Jordan is no longer required to implement IOM/ 031/FOM/ 033 dated 9 May 2008.

Lack of compliance with rules and procedures of recruitment

19. A sample check of the following nine cases out of approximately fifty recruitments made during the years 2007 to 2009 (up to June) was made to ascertain the compliance with the rules and procedures of recruitment:

Table 5: Cases checked

Sl. No.	Position	Title	Recruits' ID
1	10005131	Assistant Community Services Officer	10022648
2	10013227	Assistant Protection Officer	10023802
3	10014354	Assistant Registration Officer	10014937
4	10014353	Assistant Resettlement Officer	10006429
5	10014361	Senior Supply Clerk	10025400
6	10011927	Senior Supply Clerk	10023914
7	10011921	Senior Field Safety Clerk	10023334
8	10011922	Senior Protection Clerk	10025405
9	10013234	Senior Programme Clerk	10024631

20. The following deficiencies in regard to compliance with the most important aspects of recruitment, namely, assessing the eligibility/suitability and physical fitness of the candidates, were noticed:

(a) SAMM chapter 4.2. I.2 requires that the responsible officer in the field HR unit should shortlist candidates meeting eligibility criteria and submit the list to the selecting manager. In all cases there was no evidence of such short-listing in the HR unit on the basis of eligibility criteria. In some cases (e.g., 10005131, 10014353 and 10014361), candidates did not possess the relevant qualification or experience and it was overlooked while processing the recruitment.

(b) Again in all cases, there was no evidence of detailed evaluation of eligible candidates on the basis of suitability criteria for the variety of positions. There was only an interview summary/report on record but no detailed interview evaluation sheet prepared by the interview panelists, as prescribed in SAMM chapter 4.2.

(c) In all the cases of recruitment of NPOs reviewed, there was no documentation of the mandatory entry test for the short-listed candidates, as required in paragraph 131 of the Procedural Guidelines for Appointments, Postings and Promotions (November 2003).

(d) Verification of personal and professional references is an essential prerequisite for recruitment. SAMM chapter 4.2.I.5 requires that standard letters and questionnaires should be sent to the candidates'

previous employers and three personal references. Although, due to their confidential nature, personal and professional references are not kept in the official status file, the recruitment check list should indicate the verification of these having been done. However, in all cases the official status files did not provide any evidence of the personal and professional checks, in the absence of recruitment check list. At least in some cases (e.g., 10014361 and 10011927), no personal check could have been conducted as the reference details were not available in the personal history of the candidates.

(e) On the whole, the official status files have not been maintained fully complying with the provisions of Chapter 12 of SAMM.

Recommendations 5 to 9

The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should ensure that:

(5) The provisions of Chapter 4.2.I.2 of the Staff Administration and Management Manual regarding screening and short-listing of eligible applicants are complied with and the Human Resources Unit is effective in screening on the basis of eligibility criteria in regard to educational qualification and work experience;

(6) The provisions of Chapter 4.2.I.3 of the Staff Administration and Management Manual regarding interviewing and short-listing of suitable candidates for submission to a review body are complied with, and that a comparative evaluation is prepared for selection of the best available candidate;

(7) The UNHCR Procedural Guidelines for Appointments, Postings and Promotions (Para 131) are complied with and the mandatory entry test is always administered to the short-listed National Professional Officer candidates;

(8) The provisions of Chapter 4.2.I.5 of the Staff Administration and Management Manual regarding checking references are complied with, including the verification of all scholastic diplomas/certificates and conduct of personal and professional checks of selected candidates before appointment; and

(9) The provisions of Chapter 12 of the Staff Administration and Management Manual are complied with and the Official Status Files are maintained fully in accordance with it.

21. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 5 and stated that the Human Resources Unit and Heads of Units will be jointly involved for screening, short-listing and ensuring that the basis of eligibility is clearly documented. The UNDP e-website will also allow UNHCR Jordan to receive and filter according to the criteria needed. Further, according to the rules and regulations, only minimum educational background need be recorded in the advertisement, although as Jordan enjoys a wide-pool of qualified candidates, the office selects more highly qualified candidates especially in protection field. The Representation concurred.* Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of details of the procedures put in place to ensure screening on the basis of eligibility criteria for educational qualifications and work experience.

22. *The UNHCR Bureau accepted recommendation 6 and stated that UNHCR Jordan has started improving the standard of interview minutes and ensuring a well-documented comparative evaluation of applicants to be retained in a separate file. The Representation concurred.* Recommendation 6 remains open pending receipt of a sample of interview minutes and documentation regarding the comparative evaluation of applicants.

23. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 7 and stated that while there is no longer the requirement to submit written exams of NPO posts to the APPB Secretariat at HQ, the Representative can exercise its discretion if the manager believes in its role in the selection process in providing substantial comparative review, especially between internals and external candidates. The interview is mandatory and includes questions testing the needed areas. The Representation concurred.* Recommendation 7 remains open pending receipt of documentation explaining why Jordan is no longer required to implement the mandatory entry test to the short-listed National Professional Officer candidates.

24. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 8 and stated that UNHCR Jordan is committed to carrying out and documenting reference checks and conducts checks for project staff administered by UNDP and internal HCR staffing needs. Verification of external candidates is mostly done through phone calls after the consent of the candidate is obtained but the process will need to be further documented using the official forms in SAMM. The Representation concurred.* Recommendation 8 remains open pending receipt of additional information about how the compliance with the proposed arrangements will be monitored.

25. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 9 and stated that according to an Inspector General Office report of June 2008, personnel and administration files were well kept and under lock and key. The Office is making an ongoing attempt to ensure the highest level of record keeping is a priority. The Representation concurred.* Recommendation 9 remains open pending receipt of documentation explaining the action undertaken to ensure compliance with procedures for maintaining Official Status Files.

Desirability of discontinuing the practice of hiring additional workforce through UNDP

26. Annually, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been concluded in regard to the administration of UNDP contracts for personnel hired at the UNHCR, Jordan, under a sub-project (1133007) of projects SB/JOR/EM/133 and AB/JOR/CM/200. UNDP provides the support services in the administration and finance matters related to the personnel hired. The personnel hired are those identified and recruited by UNHCR Jordan, after advertising the positions, reviewing applications and interviewing candidates. The UNDP contracts stipulate that they are limited to the service with UNHCR in Jordan.

27. During the year 2008, more than sixty persons were hired through the UNDP service contracts, all except two, for the supplementary budget programme operations. This is in addition to an almost equal number of national staff provided in the approved staffing table as of 1 January 2008. Quite a few of the persons hired have continued from previous year(s). A table of planned service contract positions attached to the MOU describes the title and level of the positions such as field assistant (G-6), senior registration clerk (G-5), programme clerk (G-4), etc. It thus reads as a supplementary staffing table of UNHCR Jordan. The MOU is in lieu of a sub-agreement which is normally concluded with a private implementing partner for a sub-project of a UNHCR project under a programme. Here, UNDP acts as the implementing partner for administering service contracts.

28. The service contract makes it clear that it is made on behalf of UNHCR and that UNDP has been tasked to engage the services of the person concerned. There is a disparity between the terms of the personnel recruited by UNHCR Jordan but administered by UNDP and the terms of the personnel locally recruited (national staff) and administered by UNHCR. Both set of personnel are performing the same job. A comparison of the remuneration at G-5 level shows that the gross remuneration under the UNDP service contract is less than the net salary of UNHCR staff member. The disparity is wider because allowances and other entitlements of a staff member are not available to the service contract holder. This disparity undoubtedly impacts adversely on the morale of the personnel hired. Further, although a mix of programme support and programme personnel are hired, the expenditure is charged entirely to programme, thereby creating distortions.

29. In this connection, a reference is invited to paragraphs 52 and 53 of the report on the activities of the OIOS, Internal Audit Division at the UNHCR for the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, submitted to the High Commissioner on 14 July 2009. OIOS noted that its recommendation for guidelines or directives from UNHCR Headquarters regarding various types of contractual arrangements, including UNDP service contract, is receiving attention. As the matter is already under consideration, no further action is proposed here.

Points of good practice to assist with enhancing effectiveness of recruitment undertaken in Jordan

30. During the course of the audit the following points were identified which were discussed and agreed with the Representation and which are included here for information purposes:

- In six out of the nine cases reviewed, the interview panel consisted of only two members thus increasing the risk of problems with decision making in the event of a tie in decision making. It was agreed that an odd number of panelists should always be used.
- In one case of G5 staff recruitment (10014361), the Deputy Representative was on the interview panel. It would appear desirable to avoid association of a high level functionary with the initial processing of recruitments of general service national staff, in view of the composition of APPC. Further, if this functionary could be later approving the appointment in the event of an absence of the Representative, such association would not seem appropriate. On propriety and other considerations, it would be desirable to avoid association of the Representative or his Deputy with the initial processing to the General Service national staff recruitment.

Step-in-grade calculation not done in accordance with the rules

31. Although in terms of Chapter 4.2.I.6 of SAMM, the Recruitment and Postings Section should determine the step-in-grade to be granted for NPO posts, in some cases (e.g. 10014353), the initial step-in-grade had been determined locally, taking into account past service at low levels of employment or matters not relevant to the post.

Recommendation 10

(10) The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should invariably submit the determination of step-in-grade for national professional officer positions to the Division of Human Resources Management for approval.

32. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau did not accept recommendation 10, stating that the determination of the step-in-grade has been decentralized to the field office where the calculation form is available. The case cited required caution and Headquarters' approval and endorsement was sought with the calculation sheet shared with the APPB secretariat. The Representation concurred. OIOS takes note of the additional information provided. However, since Chapter 4.2.I.6 of SAMM has not been amended, recommendation 10 remains open pending receipt of documentation confirming that the determination of step-in-grade for national professional officer positions has been decentralized.*

C. Monitoring and review

Lack of effective external monitoring and review

33. It is necessary to monitor and review the exercise of any delegated authority with a view to ascertaining whether that authority is being properly exercised and taking such corrective action as may be warranted. In fact, this was contemplated when the authority for the management of local general service and national professional staff was intended to be fully delegated to the field. In this connection, paragraphs 8 of UNHCR IOM 62/FOM 69 of 22 August 1997 regarding monitoring is relevant. However, OIOS did not find any specific reporting to the UNHCR Bureau or DHRM from the field in regard to the decentralized recruitment of national staff. UNHCR Jordan did not receive any specific time table for fast tracking of recruitment of national general service staff. Partly as a consequence of this, the recruitments did not follow the fast track model. OIOS feels that this communication gap with the attendant delays in recruitment could have been avoided had there been effective monitoring and review at Headquarters.

Recommendation 11

(11) The UNHCR MENA Bureau and the Division of Human Resources Management should devise and implement a suitable reporting, monitoring and review system in order to periodically ascertain whether the authority delegated to the Field Offices for recruitment of national staff is exercised properly and to take such corrective action as may be warranted from time to time.

34. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 11 and stated that a Senior Oversight officer has been appointed for the region to ensure the monitoring of the delegation of authorities and appropriate remedial measures. The system-wide issue should be addressed under the separate cover. The Representation concurred.* Recommendation 11 remains open pending receipt of the terms of reference for the new Senior Oversight Officer, together with details of the procedures on how the work will be carried out and reported, including follow up and implementation.

Need for internal monitoring and review

35. Even under normal circumstances, the delays that were noticed in UNHCR Jordan could be regarded as excessive. The IOM 71/FOM 67 of 4 December 2002 introducing fast track model stated in paragraph 4 that under normal circumstances, the timelines were shortening to 3 – 4 months from advertisement to appointment. Although recruitment is primarily managed by the Administration/Human Resource/Finance Unit, the heads of other units are responsible for organizing interviews/tests and short-listing the candidates and presenting the cases to the APPC. The recruitment process thus requires effective coordination among all the unit heads of the field office. OIOS is of the opinion

that there should have been monitoring and review of the process at the level of the Representative, preferably in the periodical Unit Heads meetings.

Recommendation 12

(12) The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should continuously monitor and review the recruitment operations, preferably at its periodical meetings of Unit Heads.

36. *The UNHCR MENA Bureau accepted recommendation 12 and stated that a monthly schedule is being established with issues on the Head of Units Meeting agenda to ensure clear roles, policy review and timelines. The Representation concurred. Recommendation 12 remains open pending receipt of documentation showing that a monitoring mechanism through the Unit Heads' meetings has been put in place.*

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

37. We wish to express our appreciation to the Management and staff of UNHCR Jordan for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O ¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ²
1	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should develop and adopt an annual rolling plan of recruitment of national staff, subject to monthly updating as needed, in a manner that would allow effective monitoring and control.	Strategic	Medium	O	Receipt of a copy of the monthly plan and clarification of what action will be taken with respect to annual staff planning.	November 2009
2	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should establish clear work plans for all the concerned staff members engaged in recruitment activities, including the Unit Heads, and enforce their accountability as part of the performance appraisal and management system.	Human Resources	Medium	O	Receipt of a copy the schedule of monthly activities and a copy of the performance appraisal including the accountability of the Heads of Units for recruitment.	November 2009
3	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should examine the causes for recruitment delays and put in place mechanisms to avoid such delays and ensure prompt vacancy announcements in the future.	Operational	Medium	O	Receipt of information regarding the implementation of the mechanisms put in place to reduce recruitment delays.	November 2009
4	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should put in place procedures to ensure that the fast track model of recruitment of national staff is followed for future recruitment.	Operational	High	O	Receipt of documentation explaining why Jordan is no longer required to implement IOM/ 031/FOM/ 033 dated 09 May 2008.	Not provided
5	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should ensure that the provisions of Chapter 4.2.I.2 of the Staff Administration and Management Manual regarding screening and short-listing eligible applicants are complied with and the Human Resources Unit is effective in screening on the basis of eligibility criteria in regard to educational qualification and work experience.	Compliance	Medium	O	Receipt of details of the procedures put in place to monitor that the HR unit undertakes screening on the basis of eligibility criteria in regard to educational qualification and work.	Not provided

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O ¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ²
6	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should ensure that the provisions of Chapter 4.2.I.3 of the Staff Administration and Management Manual regarding interviewing and short-listing of suitable candidates for submission to a review body are complied with, and that a comparative evaluation is prepared for selection of the best available candidate.	Compliance	Medium	0	Receipt of a sample of interview minutes and documentation regarding the comparative evaluation of applicants.	Not provided
7	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should ensure that UNHCR Procedural Guidelines for Appointments, Postings and Promotions (Para 131) are complied with and the mandatory entry test is always administered to the short-listed National Professional Officer candidates.	Compliance	Medium	0	Receipt of documentation explaining why Jordan is no longer required to implement the mandatory entry test to the short-listed National Professional Officer candidates.	Not provided
8	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should ensure that the provisions of Chapter 4.2.I.5 of the Staff Administration and Management Manual regarding checking references are complied with, including the verification of all scholastic diplomas/certificates and conduct of personal and professional checks of selected candidates before appointment.	Compliance	Medium	0	Receipt of additional information about how compliance with the proposed arrangements will be monitored.	Not provided
9	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should ensure that the provisions of Chapter 12 of the Staff Administration and Management Manual are complied with and the Official Status Files are maintained fully in accordance with it.	Compliance	Medium	0	Receipt of a copy of documentation explaining the action undertaken to ensure compliance with procedures for maintaining Official Status Files.	Not provided
10	The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should invariably submit the determination of step-in-grade for national professional officer positions to the Division of Human Resources Management for approval.	Compliance	Medium	0	Receipt of documentation clarifying the decentralization of the determination of step-in-grade in respect of national professional officer positions.	Not provided
11	The UNHCR MENA Bureau and the	Governance	High	0	Receipt of a copy of the terms of reference	June 2010

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O ¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ²
12	<p>Division of Human Resources Management should devise and implement a suitable reporting, monitoring and review system in order to periodically ascertain whether the authority delegated to the Field Offices for recruitment of national staff is exercised properly and to take such corrective action as may be warranted from time to time.</p> <p>The UNHCR Representation in Jordan should continuously monitor and review the recruitment operations, preferably at its periodical meetings of Unit Heads.</p>	Governance	Medium	O	<p>for the new Senior Oversight Officer is needed, together with details of the procedures governing how the work will be carried out and reported, including how recommendations made will be followed up and implementation confirmed.</p> <p>Receipt of copies of the documentation showing that a monitoring mechanism through the Unit Heads' meetings has been put in place.</p>	November 2009

¹ C = closed, O = open

² Date provided by UNHCR in response to recommendations