



## INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

# AUDIT REPORT 2013/046

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Audit of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme of the Department of Public Information

Overall results relating to the effective delivery of outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme were initially assessed as partially satisfactory. Implementation of three important recommendations remain in progress.

FINAL OVERALL RATING: PARTIALLY SATISFACTORY

22 May 2013

Assignment No. AN2011/580/01

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# AUDIT REPORT

## Audit of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme of the Department of Public Information

### I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme managed by the Outreach Division (OD) of the Department of Public Information (DPI).
2. In accordance with its mandate, OIOS provides assurance and advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of the United Nations internal control system, the primary objectives of which are to ensure (a) efficient and effective operations; (b) accurate financial and operational reporting; (c) safeguarding of assets; and (d) compliance with mandates, regulations, and rules.
3. The General Assembly (GA) established DPI under resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946. The Department seeks to promote global awareness and enhance understanding of the work and issues of the United Nations (UN or the Organization) by providing timely, accurate, impartial, comprehensive and coherent information and undertakes the following core approaches: (a) strategic working relationships with the substantive departments and offices of the Secretariat and the organizations and bodies of the UN system; (b) enhanced use of the latest information and communications technologies, in both traditional and electronic media, to deliver information directly and instantaneously worldwide; (c) the building of expanded grass-root support through partnerships with civil society organizations; and (d) the parity of official UN languages in the preparation of news and communications products.
4. DPI implements three subprogrammes through its three substantive divisions as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Subprogrammes and divisions of DPI**

<b>Subprogramme</b>	<b>Administering substantive division</b>
Subprogramme 1: Strategic Communication Services	Strategic Communication Division
Subprogramme 2: News Services	News and Media Division
Subprogramme 3: Outreach and Knowledge-sharing Services	Outreach Division

5. The Outreach Division is responsible for implementing the subprogramme on outreach and knowledge-sharing services. The objective of the subprogramme is to enhance understanding of the role, work and concerns of the UN and to encourage the exchange of ideas, information and knowledge in support of the goals of the Organization. To accomplish this objective, DPI endeavours to expand the subprogramme's relationships with internal and external partners and further the understanding of the basic principles and priority issues of the Organization.
6. Table 2 provides the subprogramme's 2008-2011 financial information.

**Table 2: Financial information of the outreach and knowledge sharing services subprogramme**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Regular Budget</b>	<b>Extra-budgetary Budget</b>	<b>Posts (RB)</b>	<b>Posts (XB)</b>
2008 – 2009	\$39,904,700	\$3,663,400	161	10
2010 – 2011	\$39,041,600	\$3,142,100	157	10

Source: A/66/6 (Sect. 28) and A/64/6 (Sect. 27)

7. Comments provided by DPI's Outreach Division are incorporated in *italics*.

## II. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

8. The audit of Outreach Division was conducted to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of Outreach Division's governance, risk management and control processes in providing reasonable assurance regarding **the effective delivery of the subprogramme on outreach and knowledge-sharing services**.

9. The audit was included in the 2011 OIOS risk-based work plan, in discussion with DPI's Outreach Division, due to the sub-programme's risk of not achieving its objective and because the subprogramme has never been audited.

10. The key controls tested for the audit were: (a) risk management and strategic planning; (b) performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms; (c) mandate and delegation of authority; and (d) coordinated management. For the purpose of this audit, OIOS defined these key controls as follows:

- (a) **Risk management and strategic planning** - controls that provide reasonable assurance that risks relating to operations are identified, assessed and incorporated in strategic planning for appropriate mitigation.
- (b) **Performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms** - controls that provide reasonable assurance that metrics are established to monitor performance, and activities are carried out effectively.
- (c) **Mandate and delegation of authority** - controls that provide reasonable assurance on the clarity of the authority, roles and responsibilities to ensure effective and efficient programme delivery.
- (d) **Coordinated management** - controls that provide reasonable assurance that potential overlaps in the performance of a function or the delivery of a programme are mitigated and that issues affecting or involving other UN partners and actors are identified, discussed and resolved in a timely manner and at an appropriate forum.

11. The key controls were assessed for the control objectives as shown in Table 3.

12. OIOS conducted the audit from 15 May 2011 to 25 January 2012 and updated the audit results during 2-22 October 2012. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2011.

13. OIOS conducted an activity-level risk assessment to identify and assess specific risk exposures, and to confirm the relevance of the selected key controls in mitigating associated risks. Through interviews, analytical reviews and tests of controls, OIOS assessed the existence and adequacy of internal controls and conducted necessary tests to determine their effectiveness.

### III. AUDIT RESULTS

14. The Outreach Division’s governance, risk management and control processes examined were assessed as **partially satisfactory** in providing reasonable assurance regarding the effective delivery of the subprogramme on outreach and knowledge-sharing services. OIOS made three recommendations to address issues identified in the audit. The Outreach Division needed to strengthen the monitoring of the performance of its clusters by requiring them to prepare annual work plans. There was also a need to provide information on ODs library improvement projects to other UN libraries with a view to increasing opportunities for cooperation among other UN libraries and facilitating future integration. The Division’s information technology (IT) requirements needed to be based on a department-wide information and communications technology (ICT) approach.

15. The initial overall rating was based on the assessment of key controls presented in Table 3 below. The final overall rating is **partially satisfactory** as implementation of three important recommendations remains in progress.

**Table 3: Assessment of key controls**

Business objective	Key controls	Control objectives			
		Efficient and effective operations	Accurate financial and operational reporting	Safeguarding of assets	Compliance with mandates, regulations and rules
Effective delivery of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme	(a) Risk management and strategic planning	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Not assessed	Partially satisfactory
	(b) Performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Not assessed	Satisfactory
	(c) Mandate and delegation of authority	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Not assessed	Partially satisfactory
	(c) Coordinated management	Partially satisfactory	Not assessed	Not assessed	Partially satisfactory
<b>Overall Rating: Partially satisfactory</b>					

#### A. Risk management and strategic planning mechanisms

Need for clusters to document annual work plans to support OD programme budget proposal and provide a basis to monitor and evaluate performance of clusters

16. OD’s priorities and mandate were incorporated in the strategic framework of DPI, the Under Secretary-General’s (USG) compact with the Secretary-General (SG) and the programme budget for the Division. OD was organized into the following nine clusters, namely: (1) library users services; (2) information processing and acquisitions; (3) knowledge solutions and design; (4) publications and editorial; (5) advocacy and special events; (6) non-governmental organization relations; (7) education outreach; (8) visitors services; and (9) sales and marketing.

17. These clusters worked to inform and stimulate debate on the Organization's priority issues through outreach efforts targeted to the public and in alliance with key partners, including non-

governmental organizations (NGOs), the academic community, educational institutions, celebrity advocates, such as Messengers of Peace, partner libraries, other representatives of civil society and the media. They also worked to provide relevant information products and services to facilitate the work of Member States, Secretariat staff and researchers and to support internal communications at the UN. Use was made of the opportunities provided by information and communications technologies, including the Internet, web-casting and video-conferencing, to reach larger audiences, encouraging their interaction with the Organization and enhancing their access to information about the UN and global issues.

18. In the biennium 2010-2011, only three clusters prepared work plans, all in different formats. The clusters' work plans for 2012 were not available in October 2012. The Outreach Division stated that it consulted with the clusters in formulating its programme of work for the preparation of 2012-2013 biennial strategic framework and the Director of OD regularly discussed ongoing activities and future planning in his meetings with cluster management. In the absence of work plans for all clusters, it was difficult to assess the basis used in proposing the level of resources for each cluster and for the subprogramme as a whole, as well as to evaluate the effective use of those resources.

<p><b>(1) The Outreach Division should require all its clusters to prepare annual work plans to support its biennial programme budget proposal and serve as a basis for monitoring and evaluating the performance of clusters.</b></p>
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19. *The OD accepted recommendation 1 and stated that the work plans have been finalized for all clusters and received by the Director by 30 April 2013.* Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of the copies of the work plans.

## **B. Performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms**

Controls over collecting, compiling and recording the subprogramme's performance data were adequate

20. The subprogramme's expected accomplishments for the 2010-2011 biennium were: (a) strengthened and expanded relationships with partners; and (b) increased awareness of outreach and knowledge-sharing services. The related indicators of achievement for these accomplishments included: (a) increased partnerships with relevant organizations within the UN system; and (b) maintenance of the level of clients expressing satisfaction with the subprogramme's products and services; and (c) increased number of page views of the subprogramme's website. The Outreach Division had established adequate systems in place to collect, compile and record performance data against the indicators of achievement and expected accomplishments.

Provisional arrangement for recording and monitoring expenditures

21. The budget allotment for the Outreach Division was issued for the Division as a whole, and not broken down at each cluster level. As a result, clusters were not aware of their own specific allotments and expenses and this at times prevented OD from being able to spend its full budget in 2008-2009, and consequently allotments were surrendered. Cluster-wise monitoring of expenditures was also not possible because the Integrated Management and Information System (IMIS) did not break down the expenditures at the cluster level.

22. OD developed a provisional Microsoft Excel spreadsheet in 2011 for tracking the allocation of resources amongst clusters. The resources were allocated to the clusters through informal discussions without documentation. Each cluster had access to the system to record expenditures and the system was

being used as an effective planning and monitoring tool. In the absence of a cluster-wise accounting system, the use of spreadsheets for recording and monitoring expenditures functioned adequately.

### C. Mandate and delegation of authority

#### Need to increase opportunities for cooperation among UN libraries

23. Under the initiative of the Director of the Outreach Division, a Working Group on Library Improvements was formed in April 2011 to review areas such as strategic direction, technology, communications, work processes and structure. The Working Group, chaired by the Deputy Director, Administration and Management, recommended that the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (DHL) introduce new tools and infrastructure. The Working Group identified four applications as priority areas for the 2012-2013 biennium. Table 4 below lists three of these applications and shows the status of implementation at the time of the audit.

**Table 4: DHL improvement projects under implementation in OD in 2012-2013**

SI No.	Priority areas	Description	Budget	Status as of 7 January 2013
1.	Digital repository	Ensures standardization of format and metadata as well as long-term preservation	\$250,000	Solicitation process for selection of vendor under process.
2.	Discovery	Search engine for retrieving UN information	\$200,000	Technical evaluation going on. First phase to be completed by March 2013.
3.	Electronic Resources Management	Acquisition and renewal of the e-resources	\$23,676	Procured for one year in January 2012. Proposal for renewal for further two years sent to the Procurement Division in August 2012.

**(2) The Outreach Division should provide information on its library improvement projects to other UN libraries with a view to increasing opportunities for cooperation among other UN libraries and facilitating future integration.**

24. *The OD accepted recommendation 2.* Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence of the sharing of information on library improvement projects with other UN libraries.

### D. Coordinated management

#### Need to develop a department-wide ICT approach

25. OD worked with a large variety of users in offices and departments of the Secretariat, United Nations agencies, Permanent Missions, and NGOs which were spread across the globe. Given this large variety of users and wide scope of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services, OD required the use and support of specialized information and communications technologies. Some of these technologies included dedicated systems for content management, software tools for the library user services, design applications and intranet support.

26. The ICT needs of OD were addressed by a combination of ad-hoc arrangements, often not documented, with various entities. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) allowed OD to have access to its on-line databases. Third party service providers supported the activities of the publications and editorial cluster. The results of this approach were not always considered satisfactory by OD's staff. OIOS is of the opinion that the acquisition of a wide range of ICT services through ad-hoc arrangements may prevent OD from achieving the benefits of economies of scale, lowering the costs of

hardware and software through standardization, and improving its ability to control the services received with defined metrics and service level agreements. There is a need to develop a department-wide ICT approach that meets the OD's requirements.

**(3) The Department of Public Information should develop a department-wide ICT approach that makes the most efficient use of technology while allowing it to respond quickly and efficiently to rapidly evolving IT demands by prioritizing and categorizing its information and communication technology needs.**

27. *The OD accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the Department is taking necessary steps to create a departmental ICT working group that would develop a department-wide ICT approach. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of evidence that a department-wide ICT approach has been developed.*

#### **IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

28. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the Management and staff of the Department of Public Information for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

*(Signed) David Kanja*  
Assistant Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

## STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

### Audit of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme of the Department of Public Information

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Critical <sup>1</sup> / important <sup>2</sup>	C/ O <sup>3</sup>	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date <sup>4</sup>
1.	The Outreach Division should require all its clusters to prepare annual work plans to support its biennial programme budget proposal and serve as a basis for monitoring and evaluating the performance of clusters.	Important	O	Submission of copies of the annual work plans of each cluster.	30 June 2013
2.	The Outreach Division should provide information on its library improvement projects to other UN libraries with a view to increasing opportunities for cooperation among other UN libraries and facilitating future integration.	Important	O	Submission of evidence of the sharing of information on library improvement projects with other UN libraries.	31 December 2013
3.	The Department of Public Information should develop a department-wide ICT approach that makes the most efficient use of technology while allowing it to respond quickly and efficiently to rapidly evolving IT demands by prioritizing and categorizing its information and communication technology needs.	Important	O	Submission of evidence that a department-wide ICT approach has been developed.	31 October 2013

1 Critical recommendations address significant and/or pervasive deficiency or weakness in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

2 Important recommendations address important deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

3 C = closed, O = open

4 Date provided by [client] in response to recommendations. [Insert "Implemented" where recommendation is closed; (implementation date) given by the client.]

TO: Ms. Carmen Vierula, Chief, New York Audit Service  
A: Internal Audit Division, OIOS

DATE: 9 May 2013

REFERENCE:

THROUGH:

S/C DE:

FROM: Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, Under-Secretary-General  
DE: for Communications and Public Information

 9/5/13

SUBJECT: Assignment no. AN2011/580/1 – Audit of the outreach and knowledge-sharing  
OBJET: services subprogramme of the Department of Public Information

1. I write with regard to your memorandum dated 24 April 2013, transmitting the draft report of the above-mentioned audit. I would like to thank OIOS for having taken into account some of the comments and concerns that had previously been raised by the Director of the Outreach Division.

2. I am pleased to confirm that recommendation 1 has already been implemented, with workplans from all Outreach Division clusters having been finalized and received by the Director by 30 April 2013. Copies can be provided as evidence, should you so wish. Recommendation 3 is also accepted, and the Department is taking the necessary steps to create a departmental ICT working group that would develop a department-wide ICT approach.

3. With regard to recommendation 2, pertaining to the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, we would like to note that the reference to the “long-term library modernization plans of the Organization” presents a challenge for the Department. As more information has become available to the Department, it is clear that the proposal being prepared by the Secretary-General’s Change Implementation Team for consideration by Member States later this year may entail significant changes in the long-term strategy for the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and its relationship with other entities. It would therefore be difficult to have a recommendation referring to the “long-term library modernization plans of the Organization” when such plans are still being developed for consideration by Member States and whose outcome is yet to be determined and beyond the direct purview of DPI.

4. In the light of the above, we would therefore wish to propose amended wording for recommendation 2 that would meet the intention of the audit results, but frame it in a manner that is achievable by DPI, based on its functional responsibilities. Should OIOS be agreeable to such a proposal, we have taken this opportunity to reflect in the draft report suggested revised text in track changes (please see paragraphs 25-27 and Appendix 1).

5. Please note that additional edits and comments are reflected in track changes in the draft report.
6. Your feedback on our proposals and suggestions is highly appreciated.
7. Thank you.

cc: Mr. Nasser  
Mr. Calzada  
Ms. Dayal

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DRAFT

## Audit of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme of the Department of Public Information

### I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme managed by the Outreach Division (OD) of the Department of Public Information (DPI)
2. In accordance with its mandate, OIOS provides assurance and advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of the United Nations internal control system, the primary objectives of which are to ensure (a) efficient and effective operations; (b) accurate financial and operational reporting; (c) safeguarding of assets; and (d) compliance with mandates, regulations and rules.
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4. DPI implements three subprogrammes through its three substantive divisions as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Subprogrammes and divisions of DPI**

Subprogramme	Administering substantive division
Subprogramme 1: Strategic Communication Services	Strategic Communication Division
Subprogramme 2: News Services	News and Media Division
Subprogramme 3: Outreach and Knowledge-sharing Services	Outreach Division

5. The Outreach Division is responsible for implementing the subprogramme on outreach and knowledge-sharing services. The objective of the subprogramme is to enhance understanding of the role, work and concerns of the UN and to encourage the exchange of ideas, information and knowledge in support of the goals of the Organization. To accomplish this objective, DPI endeavours to expand the subprogramme's relationships with internal and external partners and further the understanding of the basic principles and priority issues of the Organization.
6. Table 2 provides the subprogramme's 2008-2011 financial information.

**Table 2: Financial information of the outreach and knowledge sharing services subprogramme**

Period	Regular Budget	Extra-budgetary Budget	Posts (RB)	Posts (XB)
2008 – 2009	\$39,904,700	\$3,663,400	161	10
2010 – 2011	\$39,041,600	\$3,142,100	157	10

Source: A/66/6 (Sect. 28) and A/64/6 (Sect. 27)

7. Comments provided by DPI's Outreach Division are incorporated in italics.

## II. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

8. The audit was conducted to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the Outreach Division's governance, risk management and control processes in providing reasonable assurance regarding the **effective delivery of the subprogramme on outreach and knowledge-sharing services.**

9. The audit was included in the 2011 OIOS risk-based work plan, in discussion with DPI's Outreach Division, due to the sub-programme's risk of not achieving its objective and because the subprogramme has never been audited.

10. The key controls tested for the audit were: (a) risk management and strategic planning; (b) performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms; (c) mandate and delegation of authority; and (d) coordinated management. For the purpose of this audit, OIOS defined these key controls as follows:

- (a) **Risk management and strategic planning** - controls that provide reasonable assurance that risks relating to operations are identified, assessed and incorporated in strategic planning for appropriate mitigation.
- (b) **Performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms** - controls that provide reasonable assurance that metrics are established to monitor performance, and activities are carried out effectively.
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- (d) **Coordinated management** - controls that provide reasonable assurance that potential overlaps in the performance of a function or the delivery of a programme are mitigated and that issues affecting or involving other UN partners and actors are identified, discussed and resolved in a timely manner and at an appropriate forum.

11. The key controls were assessed for the control objectives shown in Table 3.

12. OIOS conducted the audit from 15 May 2011 to 25 January 2012 and updated the audit results during 22 October 2012. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2011.

13. OIOS conducted an activity-level risk assessment to identify and assess specific risk exposures, and to confirm the relevance of the selected key controls in mitigating associated risks. Through interviews, analytical reviews and tests of controls, OIOS assessed the existence and adequacy of internal controls and conducted necessary tests to determine their effectiveness.

### III. AUDIT RESULTS

14. The Outreach Division's governance, risk management and control processes that were examined were **partially satisfactory** in providing reasonable assurance regarding the effective delivery of the subprogramme on outreach and knowledge-sharing services.

15. The overall rating is based on the assessment of key controls presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Assessment of key controls**

Business objective	Key controls	Control objectives			
		Efficient and effective operations	Accurate financial and operational reporting	Safeguarding of assets	Compliance with mandates, regulations and rules
Effective delivery of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme	(a) Risk management and strategic planning	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Not assessed	Partially satisfactory
	(b) Performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Not assessed	Satisfactory
	(c) Mandate and delegation of authority	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Not assessed	Partially satisfactory
	(c) Coordinated management	Partially satisfactory	Not assessed	Not assessed	Partially satisfactory

16. The Outreach Division needed to strengthen the monitoring of the performance of its clusters by requiring them to prepare annual work plans. There was also a need for synchronizing library improvement projects with long-term action plans for library modernization. The Division's information technology (IT) requirements needed to be based on a department-wide information and communications technology (ICT) approach.

17. OIOS made 3 recommendations to address issues identified in this audit. The Outreach Division accepted these recommendations and is in the process of implementing them.

#### A. Risk management and strategic planning mechanisms

Need for clusters to document annual work plans to support OD programme budget proposal and provide a basis to monitor and evaluate performance of clusters

18. OD's priorities and mandate were incorporated in the strategic framework of DPI, the Under Secretary-General's (USG) compact with the Secretary-General (SG) and the programme budget for the Division. OD was organized into the following nine clusters, namely: (1) library users services; (2) information processing and acquisitions; (3) knowledge solutions and design; (4) publications and editorial; (5) advocacy and special events; (6) non-governmental organization relations; (7) education outreach; (8) visitors services; and (9) sales and marketing.

19. These clusters worked to inform and stimulate debate on the Organization's priority issues through outreach efforts targeted to the public and in alliance with key partners, including non

governmental organizations (NGOs), the academic community, educational institutions, celebrity advocates, such as Messengers of Peace, partner libraries, other representatives of civil society and the media. They also worked to provide relevant information products and services to facilitate the work of Member States, Secretariat staff and researchers and to support internal communications at the UN. Use was made of the opportunities provided by information and communications technologies, including the Internet, web-casting and video-conferencing, to reach larger audiences, encouraging their interaction with the Organization and enhancing their access to information about the UN and global issues.

20. In the biennium 2010-2011, only three clusters prepared work plans, all in different formats. The clusters' work plans for 2012 were not available in October 2012. The Outreach Division stated that it consulted with the clusters in formulating its programme of work for the preparation of 2012-2013 biennial strategic framework and the Director of OD regularly discussed ongoing activities and future planning in his meetings with cluster management. In the absence of work plans for all clusters, it was difficult to assess the basis used in proposing the level of resources for each cluster and for the subprogramme as a whole, as well as to evaluate the effective use of those resources.

**(1) The Outreach Division should require all its clusters to prepare annual work plans to support its biennial programme budget proposal and serve as a basis for monitoring and evaluating the performance of clusters.**

21. *The OD accepted recommendation 1 and stated that starting as of 2013 the OD Director will request all clusters to prepare annual work plans.* Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of evidence that the clusters have prepared their work plans.

## **B. Performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms**

Controls over collecting, compiling and recording the subprogramme's performance data were adequate

22. The subprogramme's expected accomplishments for the 2010-2011 biennium were: (a) strengthened and expanded relationships with partners; and (b) increased awareness of outreach and knowledge-sharing services. The related indicators of achievement for these accomplishments included: (a) increased partnerships with relevant organizations within the UN system; and (b) maintenance of the level of clients expressing satisfaction with the subprogramme's products and services; and (c) increased number of page views of the subprogramme's website. The Outreach Division had established adequate systems in place to collect, compile and record performance data against the indicators of achievement and expected accomplishments.

Provisional arrangement for recording and monitoring expenditures

23. The budget allotment for the Outreach Division was issued for the Division as a whole, and not broken down at each cluster level. As a result, clusters were not aware of their own specific allotments and expenses and this at times prevented OD from being able to spend its full budget in 2008-2009, and consequently allotments were surrendered. Also, cluster-wise monitoring of expenditures was not possible because the Integrated Management and Information System (IMIS) did not break down the expenditures at the cluster level.

24. OD developed a provisional Microsoft Excel spreadsheet in 2011 for tracking the allocation of resources amongst clusters. The resources were allocated to the clusters through informal discussions without documentation. Each cluster had access to the system to record expenditures and the system was

being used as an effective planning and monitoring tool. In the absence of a cluster-wise accounting system, the use of spreadsheets for recording and monitoring expenditures functioned adequately.

**C. Mandate and delegation of authority**

Need to synchronize library improvement projects with long-term action plans for library modernization

25. Under the initiative of the Director of the Outreach Division, a Working Group on Library Improvements was formed in April 2011 to review areas such as strategic direction, technology, communications, work processes and structure. The Working Group, chaired by the Deputy Director, Administration and Management, recommended that the Dag Hammarskjöld Library (DHL) introduce new tools and infrastructure. The Working Group identified four applications as priority areas for the 2012-2013 biennium. Table 4 below lists three of these applications and shows the status of implementation at the time of the audit.

**Table 4: DHL improvement projects under implementation in OD in 2012-2013**

SI No.	Priority areas	Description	Budget	Status as of 7 January 2013
1.	Digital repository	Ensures standardization of format and metadata as well as long-term preservation	\$250,000	Solicitation process for selection of vendor under process.
2.	Discovery	Search engine for retrieving UN information	\$200,000	Technical evaluation going on. First phase to be completed by March 2013.
3.	Electronic Resources Management	Acquisition and renewal of the e-resources	\$23,676	Procured for one year in January 2012. Proposal for renewal for further two years sent to the Procurement Division in August 2012.

**Comment [UN1]:** The sub-group on technology should not be referred to as it has no standing. It is the recommendations emanating from the Working Group that are important.

**Comment [UN2]:**

**Deleted:** and its sub-group on technology

**Deleted:**

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**Deleted:**, including eleven applications

**Deleted:** five

26. In view of the General Assembly's objective of ultimate integration of all UN libraries, the stand-alone priorities set by the OD for improvement of DHL should synchronize with the long-term action plans for modernization of UN libraries.

**(2) The Outreach Division should provide information on its library improvement projects to other UN libraries with a view to increasing opportunities for cooperation among UN libraries and facilitating future integration.**

**Comment [UN3]:** We are suggesting a positive formulation of this sentence, rather than a negative one.

**Deleted:** may not

**Deleted:** synchronize its library improvement projects with long-term library modernization plans of the Organization.

27. The OD accepted recommendation 2 and stated that it was already being done, as far as technically and administratively feasible. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence of the sharing of information on library improvement projects with other UN libraries.

**Deleted:** synchronization

**D. Coordinated management**

Need to develop a department-wide ICT approach

28. OD worked with a large variety of users in offices and departments of the Secretariat, United Nations agencies, Permanent Missions, and NGOs which were spread across the globe. Given this large variety of users and wide scope of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services, OD required the use and support of specialized information and communications technologies. Some of these technologies included dedicated systems for content management, software tools for the library user services, design applications and intranet support.

29. The ICT needs of OD were addressed by a combination of ad-hoc arrangements, often not documented, with various entities. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) allowed OD to have access to its on-line databases. Third party service providers supported the activities of the publications and editorial cluster. The results of this approach were not always considered satisfactory by OD's staff. OIOS is of the opinion that the acquisition of a wide range of ICT services through ad-hoc arrangements may prevent OD from achieving the benefits of economies of scale, lowering the costs of hardware and software through standardization, and improving its ability to control the services received with defined metrics and service level agreements.

**(3) The Department of Public Information should develop a department-wide ICT approach that makes the most efficient use of technology while allowing it to respond quickly and efficiently to rapidly evolving IT demands by prioritizing and categorizing its information and communication technology needs.**

30. *The OD accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the recommendation would help streamline the ICT approach of the Department as whole.* Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of evidence that a department-wide ICT approach had been developed.

#### IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

31. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the Management and staff of the Outreach Division of the Department of Public Information for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

## AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

## Audit of the outreach and knowledge-sharing services subprogramme of the Department of Public Information

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical/ <sup>1</sup> Important <sup>2</sup>	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	The Outreach Division should require all its clusters to prepare annual work plans to support its biennial programme budget proposal and serve as a basis for monitoring and evaluating the performance of clusters.	Important	Yes	Director of Outreach Division – DPI	30 April 2013	The Director requested and has received work plans from all Clusters in the Division.
2	The Outreach Division should synchronize its library improvement projects with long-term library modernization plans of the Organization.  Proposed change: The Outreach Division should provide information on its library improvement projects to other UN libraries with a view to increasing opportunities for cooperation among UN libraries and facilitating future integration.	Important	Yes	Chief, Dag Hammarskjöld Library - DPI	31 December 2013	The “long-term library modernization plans of the Organization” is expected to be affected by a proposal being developed by the Secretary-General’s Change Implementation Team on integrating UN research, training and knowledge services. In order to have a recommendation that OD can implement under current circumstances, DPI proposes changing the formulation of the recommendation as indicated in first column.
3	The Department of Public Information should develop a department-wide ICT approach that makes the most efficient use of technology while allowing it to respond quickly and efficiently to rapidly evolving IT demands by prioritizing and	Important	Yes	Executive Officer – DPI	31 October 2013	DPI’s evidence of compliance to this recommendation will be the formation of a departmental ICT working group with a set membership and clear terms of reference, including informing all DPI staff of

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<sup>1</sup> Critical recommendations address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

<sup>2</sup> Important recommendations address important deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical/ Important?	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
	categorizing its information and communication technology needs.					the same.

DRAFT