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Programme, the United Nations  
Population Fund and the United  
Nations Office for Project Services**

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**UNFPA – Internal audit and investigation****United Nations Population Fund****Report of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services  
on UNFPA internal audit and investigation activities in 2025***Summary*

In response to Executive Board decisions 2015/2, 2015/13, 2022/15, 2022/22 and earlier pertinent Board decisions, the Director of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) of UNFPA presents herewith the report on internal audit, investigation, and advisory services for the year ending 31 December 2025.

The report includes information on: (a) the OAIS mandate; (b) internal audit opinion on the governance, risk management and internal controls of UNFPA; (c) the statement on the independence of OAIS and conformance to professional standards; (d) OAIS resources in 2025; (e) results of the implementation of the risk-based audit plan for 2025; (f) report ratings, significant audit issues, and recommendations; (g) internal audit activities and results; (h) investigations, including information on the nature of cases received, investigated and actions taken; (i) advisory services rendered in 2025; (j) other activities undertaken in 2025; and (k) a suggested way forward for the coming year and beyond.

Annexes to this report are available separately on the UNFPA website.

As required by the Executive Board in decision 2022/22 and as appropriate, potential red flags, emerging risks, internal control issues, audit findings and the status of investigations, which emerged from the work of OAIS in 2025 and which require specific attention from the Executive Board, are as follows:

- OAIS issued 32 audit reports in 2025, eight of which were rated ‘satisfactory’, 15 rated ‘partially satisfactory, with some improvement needed’, eight rated ‘partially satisfactory, with major improvement needed’, and one ‘unsatisfactory’. OAIS also issued six advisory reports to the UNFPA regional offices in 2025 that provided regional overviews of recurring challenges, control weaknesses, and areas of good practices identified in assurance and investigation activities conducted between 2023 and 2025, bringing the total number of reports issued by OAIS to 38.
- The most recurrent issues identified in the 2025 audit reports primarily involved governance, specifically in results planning, monitoring and reporting, affecting 14 country offices. These challenges stemmed from inadequate supervision, insufficient training and poor planning guidelines. Key governance issues included misaligned organizational structures and staffing arrangements in eight country offices, and inadequate risk management processes noted in seven country offices.
- Ineffective management and oversight of implementing partners was the most frequent challenge identified in the 2025 audit reports, affecting 21 country offices. Key issues noted included inadequate supervision, weak compliance with corporate policies, and poor financial monitoring. A significant concern remained the non-competitive selection

of non-governmental organization partners and failure to conduct timely assurance activities. Moreover, 14 country offices showed weaknesses in programme supplies management.

- Additionally, the 2025 audit reports identified several key operational management issues impacting multiple country offices. A major concern was noncompliance with procurement procedures, noted in 14 countries. Offices frequently failed to develop comprehensive procurement plans or establish long-term agreements for recurring purchases. Inadequate controls over financial transactions and the excessive use of cash payments, reported in 11 country offices, posed significant challenges as well.
- One audited country office had significant challenges in resource management and faced a significant funding gap, including \$2.0 million in unfunded salary costs and \$1.0 million in unbudgeted fixed costs, necessitating an emergency \$3.2 million core resource allocation from UNFPA headquarters.
- Another audited country office lost access to programme supplies valued at \$1.2 million held at a warehouse where an armed conflict was occurring. An insurance claim submitted for the programme supplies in June 2024 had yet to be settled by 31 December 2025. An additional inventory valued at \$550,000, stored at a different warehouse, expired. This was again due to the armed conflict, which caused exorbitant in-country logistics costs and reduced funding, thereby affecting the timely delivery of the programme supplies to beneficiaries.
- Three country office audits identified financial irregularities resulting in ineligible expenses and questioned costs totalling \$90,763, including payments for activities that did not occur. In another country office, a contraceptive shipment valued at \$702,780 remained undelivered to health facilities months after its handover to an implementing partner.
- On investigations, OAIS carried over 283 open cases from previous years, with the majority involving fraud, sexual misconduct and prohibited conduct. Additionally, 342 new matters were registered and one case, which had previously been closed, was re-opened. Of the new matters, 134 were opened as new cases. The new cases primarily involved UNFPA staff or affiliate personnel such as UNFPA staff and service contractors, as well as external entities such as implementing partners and suppliers. The new cases originated from the following regions: headquarters (12 cases, 9 per cent), Arab States (19 cases, 14 per cent), Asia and the Pacific (40 cases, 30 per cent), East and Southern Africa (24 cases, 18 per cent), Eastern Europe and Central Asia (17 cases, 13 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean (two cases, 1 per cent), and West and Central Africa (20 cases, 15 per cent).
- As of 31 December 2025, OAIS closed 184 cases. Of these, 135 (73 per cent) were closed through case closure notes, and 49 (27 per cent) via investigation or closure reports. Of the 49 cases, 33 were substantiated in full or in part, and two (2) third-party investigation dossier was endorsed. The primary allegations in substantiated cases included fraud and financial irregularities (21 cases, or 60 per cent), other wrongdoing (seven cases, or 20 per cent), prohibited conduct (three cases, 9 per cent), sexual misconduct (three cases, or 9 per cent), and retaliation (one case, or 2 per cent). The financial impact of substantiated fraud cases was \$2,931,265.
- OAIS continued to apply a rigorous screening process to ensure allegations fell within its mandate before opening cases. Additionally, OAIS made significant reductions in the backlog of cases by closing all remaining cases from 2019, 2020, and 2021.

*Elements of a decision*

The Executive Board may wish to:

*Take note* of: (a) the present report (DP/FPA/2026/6), which is harmonized with those of other funds and programmes, in line with Executive Board decision 2020/10; (b) the OAIS opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the UNFPA governance, risk management and control processes, as set out in this report; (c) the annual report of the Oversight Advisory Committee (DP/FPA/2026/6/Add.1); and (d) the management response thereto and to the present report (DP/FPA/2026/CRP.6);

*Acknowledge* the updated OAIS charter, which has been revised to align it with the new Global Internal Audit Standards promulgated by the Institute of Internal Auditors;

*Acknowledge* the OAIS strategy, 2026-2029, "Protecting Integrity, Enabling Results", which is designed to support the achievement of the objectives of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2026-2029.

*Express* its continuing support for strengthening and adequately resourcing OAIS functions so it can discharge its mandate and successfully implement its strategy for the 2026-2029 quadrennial period.

## Contents

I. Introduction	4
II. Mandate	4
III. Opinion	4
A. Responsibilities of UNFPA management and OAIS	4
B. Basis for internal audit opinion	4
C. Exclusions from the internal audit opinion	5
D. Overall internal audit opinion	5
IV. Statement of OAIS independence and conformance to internal audit standards and investigation principles	5
V. OAIS staffing and budget	6
VI. Quality assurance and improvement program activities	7
VII. Implementation of the 2025 risk-based audit plan	8
VIII. Internal audit activities and results	10
A. Good practices and positive developments	10
B. Report ratings, audit issues and recommendations	11
C. Implementation of internal audit recommendations	17
D. Issuance and publication of internal audit reports	18
IX. Investigation activities and results	18
X. Advisory services rendered in 2025	28
XI. Oversight, monitoring and coordination of audit and investigation activities	29
XII. Other activities undertaken in 2025	30
XIII. Overview of the OAIS strategy, 2026-2029, and the OAIS annual workplan for 2026	31
A. OAIS strategy, 2026-2029	31
B. Internal audit workplan	31
C. Investigation workplan	32
XIV. Way forward	33

## Annexes

1. OAIS charter
2. Basis of the 2025 OAIS opinion on the UNFPA governance, risk management and internal control processes
3. Summary of common (medium-risk and high-risk) issues noted in the 2025 audit reports
4. Summary of investigation and closure reports issued in 2025, by type of allegation, as of 31 December 2025
5. Detailed overview of cases registered in 2025, and cases carried over to 2026
6. Audit reports issued in 2025
7. OAIS key performance indicators
8. Recommendations unresolved for 18 months or more, as of 31 December 2025.
9. OAIS strategy, 2026-2029

## Appendices

1. Annual report of the Oversight Advisory Committee for 2025
2. Management responses to the OAIS annual report and the annual report of the Oversight Advisory Committee

*(Annexes and appendices are available on the [UNFPA website](#))*

## I. Introduction

1. This report provides the Executive Board with a summary of internal audit, investigation and advisory services delivered by the UNFPA Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) in 2025. It provides a confirmation of OAIS organizational independence and an overall opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and control processes of the organization. The report further provides: (a) highlights of other OAIS activities in 2025; (b) an overview of the 2026 OAIS annual workplan; and (c) a brief overview of planned activities and initiatives for 2026 and beyond.

## II. Mandate

2. The OAIS mandate is based on article XVII of the UNFPA financial regulations and rules, the UNFPA oversight policy,<sup>1</sup> and the UNFPA accountability framework.<sup>2</sup> These set out that OAIS solely performs and manages or authorizes others to carry out the following oversight functions: (a) independent internal audit services (on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and internal control processes, and on economic and efficient use of resources); and (b) investigation services (allegations of wrongdoing). OAIS may provide advisory services to UNFPA management, to the extent that its independence and objectivity are not compromised.

3. The existing OAIS charter was approved by the UNFPA Executive Director on 1 August 2023. Following the adoption of the Global Internal Audit Standards (effective 9 January 2025) issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), OAIS reviewed the charter to update it in line with the new standards. The proposed charter is in annex 1 for acknowledgement by the Executive Board.

## III. Opinion

### A. Responsibilities of UNFPA management and OAIS

4. UNFPA management is responsible for adequately designing, implementing and maintaining effective governance, risk management and control processes to ensure that organizational objectives are achieved. OAIS is responsible for independently assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of these processes, based on the scope of work it undertakes, as well as – where appropriately tested for operating effectiveness – reliance on second line controls instituted by UNFPA management and by third parties to whom UNFPA outsources some of its business processes.

### B. Basis for internal audit opinion

5. The internal audit opinion is based on the following (details are provided in annex 2):

6. results of OAIS audits concluded between 1 January and 31 December 2025, and cumulative audit knowledge and experience stemming from OAIS audits completed in previous years, as considered relevant;

7. status of implementation of internal audit recommendations;

8. second line controls based on reports obtained from management;

9. consideration of material deficiencies in the overall UNFPA framework of governance, risk management and controls that might, individually or collectively, diminish the achievement of the organization's objectives, as noted in the following:

(i) audits of implementing partners under the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) framework;

(ii) findings and recommendations reported by the United Nations Board of Auditors in its observation memoranda for the audit of the UNFPA financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/unfpa-oversight-policy>.

<sup>2</sup> See document DP/FPA/2007/20.

- (iii) substantiated investigation cases in 2025 involving allegations impacting UNFPA financial resources, personnel and beneficiary well-being, as well as overall reputational risks; and
- (iv) results of strategic and fraud-risk assessments completed as part of the enterprise risk management process implemented by management, to the extent available, when preparing this opinion.

### C. Exclusions from the internal audit opinion

10. In 2025, as in previous years, UNFPA outsourced significant functions to other United Nations system organizations, including: (a) selected human resources management activities; (b) payroll preparation and payment for staff and service contract holders; (c) payment processing; (d) treasury management; (e) hosting and management of the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system; and (f) other information technology services. UNFPA management relied on the management and fiduciary oversight activities of the United Nations organizations to which these functions were outsourced, regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of the related governance, risk management and internal control processes. These outsourced functions are subject to the provisions on internal audit provided for in the respective United Nations organizations' policies and procedures and are not covered by the OAIS audit opinion. OAIS received confirmation from the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations that most of these outsourced functions were covered by its audits in recent years, from 2017 to 2025. UNDP is the main provider of outsourced services to UNFPA.

11. UNFPA also outsourced numerous information and communications technology functions, including the hosting of significant systems (e.g., email, cloud storage, website hosting), to third-party service providers. These are audited in accordance with the respective third parties' policies and procedures and are also not covered by the OAIS opinion.

### D. Overall internal audit opinion

12. Based on the scope of work undertaken, the overall opinion of OAIS is that the adequacy and effectiveness of the UNFPA governance, risk management and control processes were '*partially satisfactory, with some improvement needed*' – which means the assessed processes were adequately designed and operating effectively but needed some improvement to provide reasonable assurance that the objectives of the audited entity/area should be achieved. The issues and improvement opportunities identified did not significantly affect the achievement of the audited entity/area objectives. Management action is recommended to ensure that identified risks are adequately mitigated.<sup>3</sup>

## IV. Statement of OAIS independence and conformance to internal audit standards and investigation principles

13. The Director of OAIS hereby confirms to the Executive Board that OAIS maintained its organizational independence in 2025. Within the resources made available by management and the authority delegated to its Director, OAIS was free from interference in determining its audit scope and in performing and communicating the results of its work.

14. Of the 32 internal audit reports issued in 2025, seven – whose engagements were carried forward from 2024 and prior years – were concluded in conformity with the then prevailing International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing (the Standards) and the code of ethics of the Institute of Internal Auditors. The Standards and the code of ethics were adopted for use by the Representatives of the Internal Audit Services of the United Nations system organizations (UN-RIAS) in June 2002. The remaining 25 engagements, which commenced in 2025, were concluded in conformance with the new Global Internal Audit Standards.

15. OAIS conducts investigations in compliance with the staff rules and regulations of the United Nations, the OAIS charter, the UNFPA disciplinary framework, the UNFPA oversight policy and the uniform principles and guidelines for investigations, as endorsed by the 10th Conference of International Investigators, held in June 2009.

<sup>3</sup> The rating for 2025 is the same as that in the previous year. The UNFPA audit rating definitions are harmonized with those of the United Nations Children's Fund, UNOPS and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. UNDP has adopted different rating definitions.

It is also guided by jurisprudence of the United Nations dispute and appeals tribunals and best practices for investigation, as adopted by counterpart investigative bodies.

16. The OAIS charter and both the old Standards<sup>4</sup> and the new Global Internal Audit Standards,<sup>5</sup> promulgated by the IIA, mandate the Director of OAIS to maintain a quality assurance and improvement programme that involves ongoing and periodic assessments of the entire spectrum of internal audit and consulting work performed by the internal audit function. A dedicated Quality Assurance, Policy and Reporting Unit in the Office of the Director of OAIS monitors compliance with relevant requirements and manages the programme to ensure that OAIS provides high-quality services and formulates its audit programmes and procedures, including the preparation of its reports, in conformance with standards promulgated by the IIA.

17. Maintenance and faster delivery of high-quality investigative outputs within the Investigation Branch is achieved through UNFPA investigation staff and the recruitment of quality assurance-focused consultants, who are tasked with reviewing the evidentiary bases of investigative findings, the soundness of investigative methodology, the thoroughness of inquiries, adherence to due process obligations, and conformity with internationally accepted investigative practices and standards.

## V. OAIS staffing and budget

18. As of 31 December 2025, OAIS had 30 approved posts: four in the Office of the Director of OAIS (OAIS Directorate); 13 in the Internal Audit Branch; and 13 in the Investigation Branch. In 2025, for the first time in several years, OAIS reached a full staffing complement because of targeted recruitment efforts (see table 1). OAIS completed the recruitment of four vacant fixed-term positions (three professional posts in Investigation Branch and one support post in the OAIS Directorate), achieving a zero-vacancy rate in fixed-term appointment positions as of 31 December 2025, compared to a 13 percent vacancy rate in 2024.

19. The OAIS staff complement was augmented by consultants hired at various points during the year as follows: one in the Directorate; 25 in the Internal Audit Branch; and 22 in the Investigation Branch. Additionally, in 2025, OAIS used professional service firms when conducting its internal audit and investigations work.

**Table 1. Staffing and budget at year-end 2024 and 2025, by OAIS unit**

	Internal audit		Investigation		Directorate		Total	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025*
D2 and professional posts – approved	12	12	12	12	3	3	27	27
Professional posts – filled	12	12	9	12	3	3	24	27
Support posts – approved	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3
Support posts – filled	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	3
<b>Vacant posts</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
Budget allocation ( <i>thousands of US dollars</i> )	5 738	5 859	5 051	5 893	1 825	1 896	12 614	13 648
Budget utilization ( <i>thousands of US dollars</i> )	5 176	5 699	4 473	5 704	1 381	1 802	11 030	13 205
<b>Budget remaining (<i>thousands of US dollars</i>)</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>1 584</b>	<b>443</b>

(\*) Note: 2025 figures may not be final, subject to finalization of the accounts closure.

20. To support its activities in 2025, the OAIS budget was \$13.6 million (\$12.6 million in 2024) – both figures are inclusive of a \$2.7 million investment by UNFPA in OAIS, carried forward from unspent budget balances in 2022.

21. In the interim, the unspent budget balances were used to create 11 temporary posts. Five posts were filled as of 31 December 2025. Two posts were filled during the first quarter of 2026, and recruitment for two other posts

<sup>4</sup> International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing 1300 series, ‘Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme’.

<sup>5</sup> Global Internal Audit Standards, Standard 8.3, ‘Quality’.

was completed by year-end, with the selected candidates informed of their selection. As part of a corporate-wide exercise to plan for a large and sustained resource reduction, OAIS participated in an adverse revenue scenario exercise, which resulted in the abolition of the two remaining temporary posts.

22. The originally approved budget available for OAIS activities in 2026 is \$10.9 million (2025: \$13.6 million, comprising an adjusted approved budget of \$11.5 million under the adverse revenue scenario and a one-off carry-forward of \$2.049 million from prior years) Notably, the 2026 budget did not include funding for three approved temporary appointment positions. In early 2026, OAIS requested additional funds from the Resource Management Committee (RMC) to cover these positions.

23. The RMC approved the requested resources for 2026 and 2027 by advancing funds from the OAIS 2028 and 2029 budgets to meet the funding requirements for the temporary appointment posts. As part of the approval, the RMC encouraged OAIS to review its current structure and immediately propose a staffing realignment.

24. The budget reduction, particularly in operational expenses, is likely to affect the delivery of the OAIS mandate in 2026 and beyond. OAIS will prioritize the efficient use of available resources to implement its workplan and will maintain close coordination with the RMC and the Office of the Executive Director to address budget shortfalls as they emerge.

## VI. Quality assurance and improvement programme activities

25. In 2025, OAIS issued a record 38 reports (32 audit and six advisory), a 31 per cent increase from the 29 reports issued in 2024. This occurred against an 8 per cent budget increase, from \$12.6 million in 2024 to \$13.6 million in 2025, demonstrating improved productivity and value from the resources entrusted to OAIS. OAIS laid a strong foundation for delivering the strategic objectives outlined in the OAIS Strategy, 2026-2029, by strengthening risk-based assurance, expanding strategic advisory services, deepening partnerships and stakeholder engagement, building a future-ready workforce, embedding continuous quality improvement, and leveraging digital technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning.

26. As part of its quality assurance and improvement programme, OAIS commissioned an independent mid-term internal quality assessment in December 2025. This assessment served as a gap analysis of conformance with the new Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS). The assessment concluded in the first quarter of 2026. In the independent assessor's opinion, UNFPA internal audit activity generally conforms to the IIA's Global Internal Audit Standards, the second-highest category of conformance. The results included three recommendations to support continuous improvement and, in some cases, to move the overall rating of the GIAS domains from "general conformance" to "full achievement", the highest category of conformance. Of the five GIAS domains assessed, three were rated "full achievement" and two were rated "general conformance". OAIS will aim to implement all three recommendations ahead of the external quality assessment scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2026.

27. As part of the assessment exercise, OAIS reviewed its existing Charter to align it with GIAS, developed the OAIS Strategy, 2026-2029, to support the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2026-2029, and updated its audit manual and standard operating procedures to reflect GIAS requirements.

28. To complement the internal quality assessment, the Quality Assurance, Policy, and Reporting Unit in the Office of the Director of OAIS conducted several proactive monitoring activities, as part of the annual quality assurance and improvement programme. These activities included reviewing all 32 audit reports issued during the year (to ensure findings were supported and the reports were ready for public disclosure), preparing the six advisory reports for senior management, and periodically reviewing audit engagement files in the audit management system to assess compliance with documentation, review and reporting standards. The engagement file reviews identified areas requiring improvement; the Internal Audit Branch was informed and took timely corrective actions.

29. Close monitoring of the audit engagement process contributed to a continued reduction in average engagement completion timelines (from fieldwork completion to final report issuance): from 215.6 days in 2023 to 89.5 days in 2024, and then to 81.1 days in 2025. These timelines are in line with the 90-day key performance indicator defined in the OAIS audit manual. This remarkable achievement underscores engagement efficiency gains at OAIS. Other efficiencies achieved include a 97 per cent internal audit workplan implementation rate, 100 per cent compliance with the Executive Board decision 2015/2 on public disclosure of audit reports, and an 88 per cent

client satisfaction rate with a 100 per cent response rate to OAIS satisfaction surveys. This indicates the high value clients perceive in OAIS internal audit services.

30. Throughout 2025, OAIS communicated various aspects of its quality assurance and improvement programme to the Executive Board, the Executive Director, the Executive Committee, and the Oversight Advisory Committee. These aspects included preparing the 2025 OAIS annual workplan and periodic reporting on its implementation, providing information on the implementation status of internal audit recommendations, sharing lessons learned from audits concluded in 2025, detailing key emerging risks identified from the 2025 audits, outlining key challenges in implementing the annual workplan, presenting the results of the annual risk assessment, holding meetings with the United Nations Board of Auditors to map out assurance coverage (including communicating the internal audit workplan for 2025), and consolidating the results of post-audit client satisfaction surveys by preparing a report for senior management, among others.

## VII. Implementation of the 2025 risk-based audit plan

31. OAIS conducts its assurance activities in accordance with an audit plan that is based on a documented risk assessment of the UNFPA audit universe. Risk is measured through a set of indicators representing the potential impact and likelihood of events that might adversely affect the achievement of objectives of the business units, processes and systems assessed. The audit plan is reviewed by the Oversight Advisory Committee, which recommends it for approval to the Executive Director. Once approved by the Executive Director, the audit plan is submitted to the Executive Board on a no-objection basis.

32. The 2025 audit plan comprised 40 engagements – seven carried forward from 2024 or prior years, and 33 new engagements.

33. All seven engagements carried forward from 2024 or prior years were concluded, and the audit reports were issued by 31 July 2025.

34. As of 31 December 2025, the status of the 33 new engagements planned for 2025 was as follows: (a) 25 were completed, with the resultant reports issued within the year; (b) six were completed, with the reports scheduled for issuance by the second quarter of 2026; (c) a business process audit engagement commenced in December 2025 with the audit fieldwork phase scheduled to end in the first quarter of 2026; and (d) an assessment of the Headquarters Optimization Project was rescheduled from 2025 to 2026 to accommodate the relocation of key headquarters divisions to Nairobi, Kenya. The engagement is scheduled for completion by the end of March 2026.

35. OAIS issued 32 audit reports and six advisory reports in 2025. With a total of 38, the number of reports issued increased by nine from the 29 reports issued in 2024, indicating continued improvement in OAIS audit processes, which has been on an upward trend since 2022 when only nine reports were issued. The 38 reports mark an all-time high for both audit and advisory reports issued by OAIS in any given year.

36. The outcome of the 2025 risk-based audit plan and the status of its implementation are presented in table 2.

**Table 2. Status of implementation of the 2025 audit plan**

Type of engagement	#	Engagement	Status (as of 16 March 2026)
<b>ENGAGEMENTS STARTED IN 2023 AND TO BE COMPLETED IN 2025</b>			
<i>Corporate and business process</i>	1	Fraud risk management process	Report #13 issued in July 2025.
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>ENGAGEMENTS STARTED IN 2023 AND TO BE COMPLETED IN 2024</b>			
<i>Corporate and business process</i>	2	Gender equality and women's empowerment in UNFPA	Report #2 issued in January 2025.
		UNFPA emergency response activities	Report #6 issued in March 2025.

<i>Regional office</i>	1	East and Southern Africa Regional Office	Report #5 issued in March 2025.
<i>Country office</i>	3	Uruguay	Report #1 issued in January 2025.
		Myanmar	Report #3 issued in February 2025.
		Eswatini	Report #4 issued in February 2025.
<b><i>SUBTOTAL</i></b>	<b>6</b>		
<b>ENGAGEMENTS STARTED AND COMPLETED IN 2025</b>			
<i>Corporate and business process</i>	7	Results-based management practices at UNFPA	Report #21 issued in October 2025.
		Cash and voucher assistance programming at UNFPA	Report #24 issued in November 2025.
		Information and communication technology governance	Report #32 issued in December 2025.
		UNFPA country programme formulation and development process	Report #2 issued in March 2026.
		UNFPA supply chain management and procurement strategy	Draft report under preparation.
		Organizational culture at UNFPA	Audit fieldwork phase commenced in December 2025. Engagement scheduled for completion in the second quarter of 2026.
		Assessment of the Headquarters Optimization Project	Rescheduled from 2025 to 2026 to accommodate the relocation of key headquarters divisions to Nairobi, Kenya. The assessment's fieldwork phase commenced in January 2026. Engagement carried forward to the 2026 audit plan.
<i>Regional office</i>	1	Arab States Regional Office	Report #28 issued in December 2025.
<i>Country office</i>	25	Mali	Report #7 issued in April 2025.
		Algeria	Report #8 issued in May 2025.
		Belarus	Report #9 issued in June 2025.
		Serbia	Report #10 issued in June 2025.
		Somalia	Report #11 issued in June 2025.
		The Gambia	Report #12 issued in June 2025.
		Malawi	Report #14 issued in August 2025.
		China	Report #15 issued in August 2025.
		Georgia	Report #16 issued in August 2025.
		Bangladesh	Report #17 issued in September 2025.
		Türkiye	Report #18 issued in September 2025.
		Peru	Report #19 issued in September 2025.
		Pakistan	Report #20 issued in September 2025.
		Burkina Faso	Report #22 issued in October 2025.
		Nigeria	Report #23 issued in October 2025.
Benin	Report #25 issued in November 2025.		
Iraq	Report #26 issued in December 2025.		

		Ecuador	Report #27 issued in December 2025.
		Sudan	Report #29 issued in December 2025.
		Uganda	Report #30 issued in December 2025.
		Brazil	Report #31 issued in December 2025.
		Uzbekistan	Report #3 issued in March 2026.
		Niger	Report #1 issued in March 2026.
		South Sudan	Draft report issued to management for comment before finalization.
		Zimbabwe	Draft report under preparation for issuance to management for comment.
<b><i>SUBTOTAL</i></b>	<b>33</b>		
<b><i>GRAND TOTAL</i></b>	<b>40</b>		

## VIII. Internal audit activities and results

### A. Good practices and positive developments

37. Based on the 32 audit reports issued in 2025, OAI identified and shared with management 66 good practices and/or positive developments at the strategic, operational and compliance levels, which could be adopted by other business units in the organization.

38. Good practices common among country offices included the following:

(a) Seventeen country offices fostered and sustained positive relationships with other United Nations organizations and offices of the United Nations Resident Coordinator by actively participating in inter-agency coordination clusters, joint programmes and working groups, with some of the country offices taking on lead roles in specific thematic areas;

(b) Eleven country offices made efforts at resource mobilization, maintaining close engagement with existing and potential donors, raising significant resources in the process. In several cases, these efforts resulted in significant programme country contributions, increased visibility and strategic positioning of UNFPA as a trusted partner; and

(c) Five country offices developed innovative monitoring, evaluation and activity tracking tools to strengthen programme oversight.

(d) A good practice common among two regional offices was the establishment of strong internal coordination mechanisms and programme management mechanisms.

39. Good practices and/or positive developments identified from audits of corporate business processes included the following:

(a) UNFPA established a solid foundation for information and communication technology (ICT) governance, supported by formal structures, documented processes, active engagement of its governance bodies, formal terms of reference for the governance bodies, a documented ICT strategy, and well-established change management and oversight mechanisms.

(b) Five good practices related to gender equality and women's empowerment practices were identified: effective use of the gender marker system; meeting or exceeding all key performance indicators of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP 2.0) from 2021 to 2023; obtaining EDGE Move certification and renewing EDGEplus certification; increasing female representation in leadership roles; and staff survey results indicating that UNFPA has made significant progress in mainstreaming gender into its programmes and operations;

(c) Four good practices related to emergency response activities and humanitarian preparedness were identified: revising the emergency response framework; establishing a global emergency response team; expanding the surge roster (while incorporating new specialized profiles in procurement, supply chain, gender-based violence

information management, and access/civil-military coordination); and leveraging the Emergency Fund and the Humanitarian Thematic Fund to provide immediate, flexible financial support;

(d) Five good practices related to the organization's fraud risk management process were identified: senior management's proactive commitment to integrity and accountability; the establishment of the UNFPA policy against fraudulent and other proscribed practices; the adoption of a comprehensive risk assessment methodology integrating contributions from enterprise risk management focal points across various business units; the development and implementation of a UNFPA risk management guide; and the provision of a comprehensive framework and practical tools for staff and partners to effectively manage risks; and

(e) Five good practices related to results-based management (RBM) were identified: articulating clear corporate commitment to a results culture; expanding the RBM SEAL<sup>6</sup> initiative to strengthen RBM practices; fostering peer-to-peer learning opportunities; promoting periodic meetings to discuss results information, track progress, identify challenges and adapt activities; and revising job descriptions for monitoring and evaluation personnel.

## B. Report ratings, audit issues and recommendations

40. For individual assurance<sup>7</sup> engagements, OASIS assigns an overall audit rating based on its assessment of the relevant governance, risk management and control processes at the business unit or process level.

41. Ratings for audits concluded in 2025 are summarized in table 3 below. OASIS issued 32 audit reports, eight of which were rated 'satisfactory', 15 rated 'partially satisfactory, with some improvement needed', eight rated 'partially satisfactory, with major improvement needed', and one 'unsatisfactory'.

**Table 3. Distribution of audit conclusions by region and thematic area for 2025**

Audited area	Number of audits	Satisfactory	Partially satisfactory, with some improvement needed	Partially satisfactory, with major improvement needed	Unsatisfactory
<b>Country office audits:</b>					
Asia and the Pacific	4	1	3		
Arab States	4		2	1	1
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	4	4			
Eastern and Southern Africa	3		1	2	
Latin America and the Caribbean	4	1	3		
West and Central Africa	5			5	
<i>Subtotal – country office audits</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>1</i>
<b>Regional office audits:</b>					
<i>Arab States Regional Office</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>			
<i>East and Southern Africa Regional Office</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>1</i>		
<i>Subtotal – subregional office audits</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>

<sup>6</sup> The RBM SEAL is a corporate initiative that intends to capitalize on innovative ways of institutionalizing a results culture in UNFPA.

<sup>7</sup> Assurance services involve an objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment on governance, risk management, and control processes for the organization.

Audited area	Number of audits	Satisfactory	Partially satisfactory, with some improvement needed	Partially satisfactory, with major improvement needed	Unsatisfactory
<b>Process audits:</b>					
Gender equality and women's empowerment in UNFPA	1		1		
UNFPA emergency response activities	1		1		
Fraud risk management process	1		1		
RBM practices at UNFPA	1		1		
Cash and voucher assistance programming at UNFPA	1		1		
Information and communication technology governance	1	1			
<i>Subtotal – process audits</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>

**a. Business unit audits**

42. OASIS concluded 24 audits of country offices in 2025. The results of the audits identified some common themes in audit issues and recommendations across the audited offices, as outlined below, by thematic area.

*Governance*

- (a) Train personnel in results planning, monitoring and reporting, strengthen quality assurance processes to formulate high-quality results plans with accurate baselines and realistic targets, and improve monitoring and reporting supported by verifiable evidence;
- (b) Align staff members' individual performance goals with office results plans to enhance accountability for results;
- (c) Undertake risk assessments, including fraud risk assessments, and improve risk management practices by actively tracking and managing identified risks and implementing corresponding risk response measures using the corporate enterprise risk management tool; and
- (d) Conduct timely reviews of organizational structures and staffing arrangements to align them with programme delivery needs, expedite recruitment for vacant positions, implement succession planning, and reduce reliance on local service contracts for core functions.

*Programme management*

- (a) Strengthen programme planning, monitoring and reporting processes by training relevant staff on policy requirements and corporate guidance. This includes using UNFPA's results-based management system, creating annual results plans with clear output indicators, milestones and targets, developing detailed annual monitoring plans with defined responsibilities, aligning baselines and targets across systems, and implementing quality assurance controls to ensure compliance with these requirements;
- (b) Strengthen work planning and financial management by establishing clear timelines and responsibilities for workplan preparation and approval, implementing operational review controls using policy-recommended checklists, ensuring full cost recovery from non-core resources, aligning output indicators between results and resources plans and workplans, and developing diversified resource mobilization strategies;
- (c) Strengthen implementing partner management by using competitive methods to select non-governmental organization partners, conducting timely HACT assurance activities, enhancing programmatic and financial

monitoring controls, ensuring compliance with protection against sexual exploitation and abuse guidelines (including timely capacity assessments), strengthening oversight of subcontracting practices, improving workplan management through rigorous quality review processes, establishing appropriate cash transfer modalities based on partner ratings, and ensuring timely follow-up on recommendations from assurance activities;

(d) Strengthen supervisory controls to ensure timely implementation of planned activities, submission of donor reports, and effective coordination and communication with donors; and

(e) Strengthen programme supplies management by conducting rigorous needs assessments, integrating programme supplies-related activities into workplans, enhancing commodity storage and distribution controls, and establishing monitoring processes to track supplies to the last mile.

#### *Operations management*

(a) Comply with procurement procedures, particularly those related to developing comprehensive procurement plans, using competitive solicitation methods, properly documenting the receipt and inspection of goods using policy-mandated reports, submitting qualifying cases to contracts review committees, and establishing long-term agreements for regularly purchased goods and services;

(b) Strengthen financial controls by adhering to prescribed procedures for executing and recording advance payments, promptly recovering value-added tax, identifying and engaging appropriate payment service providers for cash disbursements with enhanced monitoring mechanisms, and correctly classifying financial transactions; and

(c) Ensure competitive selection and timely contract signing of individual consultants, strengthen supervisory controls over recruitment and separation, train staff on policies, obtain necessary approvals, and enforce compliance with travel policy requirements.

#### *Support to and oversight of country offices*

43. OASIS issued two regional office audit reports in 2025. The audits identified, as a common theme, the need to strengthen regional office oversight of, and technical assistance to, country offices. This includes developing comprehensive oversight frameworks covering high-risk areas – such as programme planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting; compliance with procurement and implementing partner management procedures; and financial sustainability – as well as ensuring adequate human resource capacity to provide timely technical support.

#### *High-risk issues noted in audits*

44. The audits completed in 2025 identified several high-risk issues requiring the specific attention of the Executive Board, mainly at the level of individual business units:

(a) One country office exhibited pervasive internal control deficiencies, increasing the risk of misuse of funds that resulted in ineffective programme implementation. In 2024, it lacked an effective resource management process and a comprehensive budgeting approach to account for all actual and planned resources and expenditures. Consequently, it faced a significant funding gap, including \$2.0 million in unfunded salary costs and \$1.0 million in unbudgeted fixed costs, necessitating an emergency \$3.2 million core resource allocation from UNFPA headquarters. The country office circumvented controls by splitting contracts for the procurement of dignity kits totalling \$1.38 million to bypass the higher-level Contracts Review Committee reviews.

(b) Another audited country office lost access to programme supplies valued at \$1.2 million stored in a warehouse affected by ongoing armed conflict. An insurance claim submitted for the programme supplies in June 2024 remained unsettled as of December 2025. Additional inventory, valued at \$550,000 and stored at a different warehouse, expired. These losses resulted from conflict-related disruptions, which caused exorbitant in-country logistics costs and reduced funding, affecting the timely delivery of the programme supplies to beneficiaries.

(c) Three country office audits identified financial irregularities resulting in ineligible expenses and questioned costs totalling \$90,763, including payments for activities that did not take place. In a separate case, 88 laptops valued at over \$153,000 could not be located in one office, while in another, a contraceptive shipment valued at \$702,780 remained undelivered to health facilities months after its handover to an implementing partner.

45. Further details on common (medium-risk and high-risk) issues and recommendations are provided in annex 3.

## b. Corporate and process audits

46. OASIS concluded six corporate and business process audit engagements in 2025. These were the audits of the gender equality and women's empowerment practices at UNFPA, emergency response activities, the fraud risk management process, results-based management practices, cash and voucher assistance programming, and information and communication technology governance.

47. The audit of gender equality and women's empowerment practices at UNFPA<sup>8</sup> resulted in an overall rating of 'partially satisfactory, with some improvement needed', with four medium priority recommendations. The audit provided recommendations to address the following issues: (a) impact of changes to the gender architecture not assessed; (b) non-completion of mandatory training on gender equality; (c) delayed implementation of the Senior Accountability Mechanism;<sup>9</sup> and (d) gender equality and women's empowerment aspects not included in key implementing partner templates and documents. The audit was undertaken to fulfil the requirements of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, with the overall objective of assessing the extent to which UNFPA has mainstreamed gender in its policies, procedures, programmes and practices. Starting from 2018, OASIS has considered gender and equality as a cross-cutting area that impacts all UNFPA business processes.

48. The audit of emergency response activities<sup>10</sup> resulted in an overall rating of 'partially satisfactory, with some improvement needed', with three high priority recommendations out of a total six. OASIS recommended that UNFPA develop a standard tool or comprehensive corporate system to streamline, capture, track and report on key deliverables for emergency response activities, formalized through a detailed plan of action with clear timelines, deliverables and responsibilities. Furthermore, OASIS recommended leveraging the ongoing revision of minimum preparedness actions to incorporate requirements for risk analysis and monitoring as continuous processes, with clear guidance on interagency collaboration, where applicable.

49. The audit of fraud risk management process at UNFPA<sup>11</sup> resulted in an overall rating of 'partially satisfactory, with some improvement needed', with three high priority recommendations out of a total five. OASIS recommended that UNFPA clarify the ownership of fraud risk at the corporate level and strengthen the corporate-level governance and accountability mechanisms for fraud risk management, ensuring clear lines of responsibility for its oversight, documentation and monitoring within the established enterprise risk management framework. In addition, OASIS recommended enhancing the corporate enterprise risk management application to enable consolidation, regular updating and analysis of fraud risks across all business units. OASIS also highlighted the need for written guidance on the protections available to UNFPA personnel who report fraudulent or proscribed practices. The protections should be appropriately disseminated throughout the organization and made available to staff who report concerns.

50. The audit of results-based management practices at UNFPA<sup>12</sup> resulted in the issuance of 12 recommendations, of which three were of high priority. OASIS recommended that UNFPA update its results-based management policy and integrate all key elements of the results-based management framework into the proposed programme manual under development. Furthermore, OASIS highlighted a need for the organization to enhance its guidelines on the development of indicators, baselines and targets to incorporate clear instructions on how to set them, annualize targets, and track and utilize qualitative data in monitoring results at the outcome level. In addition, OASIS recommended issuing guidelines for performance data quality assessments and validation to support continuous monitoring. These measures were aimed at mitigating risks, such as a fragmented and outdated results-based management framework undermining relevance and effectiveness; limited and inconsistent use of results information weakening evidence-informed programme adjustments; unverified data leading to poor planning and decision-making; and inadequate programme monitoring resulting in wasted resources and missed opportunities for improvement.

51. The audit of ICT governance at UNFPA<sup>13</sup> resulted in an overall 'satisfactory' rating. It concluded that UNFPA established a solid foundation for ICT governance, supported by formal structures, documented processes,

<sup>8</sup>. Audit report number: [IA/2025-02](#) - Audit of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Practices at UNFPA.

<sup>9</sup>. A high-level framework or initiative that ensures gender equality goals are integrated and implemented across all UN activities and programmes.

<sup>10</sup>. Audit report number: [IA/2025-06](#) - Audit of UNFPA Emergency Response Activities.

<sup>11</sup>. Audit report number: [IA/2025-12](#) - Audit of the Fraud Risk Management Process at UNFPA.

<sup>12</sup>. Audit report number: [IA/2025-21](#) - Audit of Results-Based Management Practices at UNFPA.

<sup>13</sup>. Audit report number: [IA/2025-32](#) - Audit of ICT Governance at UNFPA.

active engagement of its governance bodies, formal terms of reference for its governance bodies, a documented ICT strategy, and well-established change management and oversight mechanisms.

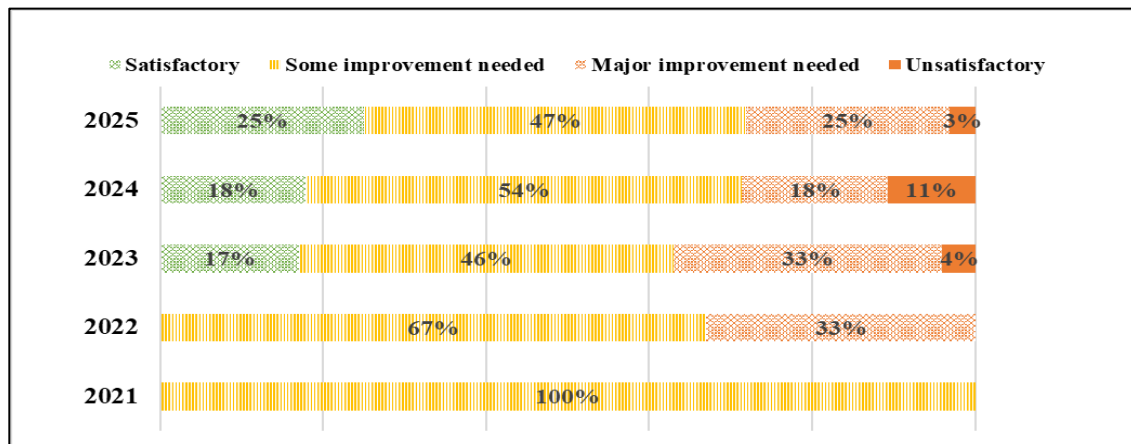
52. In 2025, management took action to address matters raised in the 2024 OAI opinion on the organization’s governance, risk management and control processes, as well as recommendations provided in the internal audit reports issued in 2025. Several of the recommendations that were due for implementation in 2025 were already closed by the end of the year. Details of actions taken by management in 2025 are outlined in annex 2.

**c. Internal audit strategy**

53. Although 3 per cent (11 per cent in 2024) of the 32 reports issued in 2025 had an overall rating of ‘unsatisfactory’ and 25 per cent ‘partially satisfactory, with major improvement needed’ (18 per cent in 2024), none of the issues identified in the reports (the more prevalent ones of which are highlighted in the subsections above) were assessed as being significant enough to significantly affect the achievement of UNFPA objectives.

54. Figure 1 below provides an overview of internal audit ratings on audit reports issued for 2021-2025.

**Figure 1. Overview of internal audit ratings for 2021-2025**

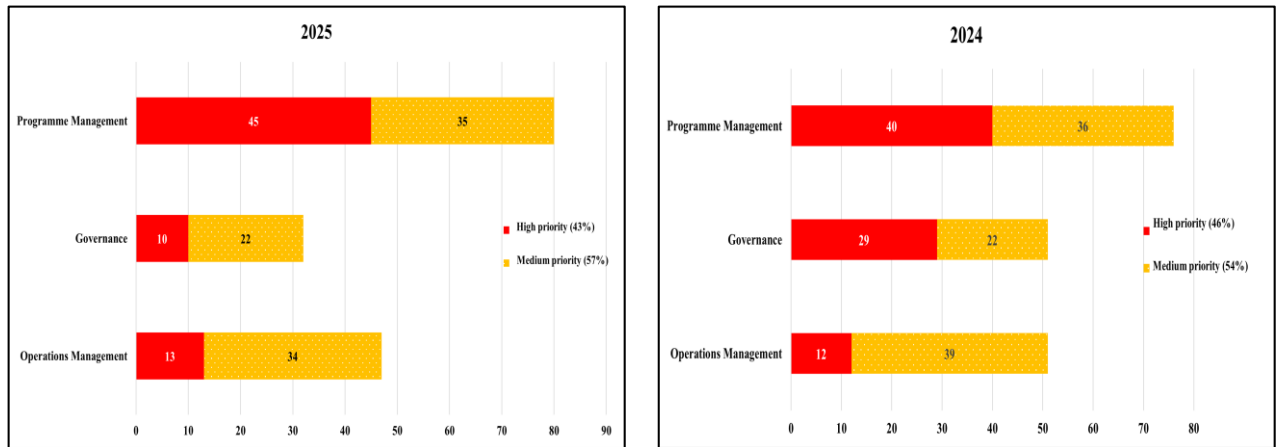


**d. New internal audit recommendations**

55. The 32 audit reports issued in 2025 resulted in 203 recommendations, 84 (41 per cent) of which were ranked ‘high priority’.

56. Overall, 159 recommendations were issued to country offices in 2025 (178 in 2024). The pattern in 2025 was consistent with that of 2024, with ‘programme management’ being the largest category. A larger proportion of recommendations (80, or 50 per cent) were issued under ‘programme management’ in 2025 (76, or 43 per cent in 2024). The proportion of ‘high’ priority recommendations slightly decreased in 2025, compared to 2024 (see figure 2 below).

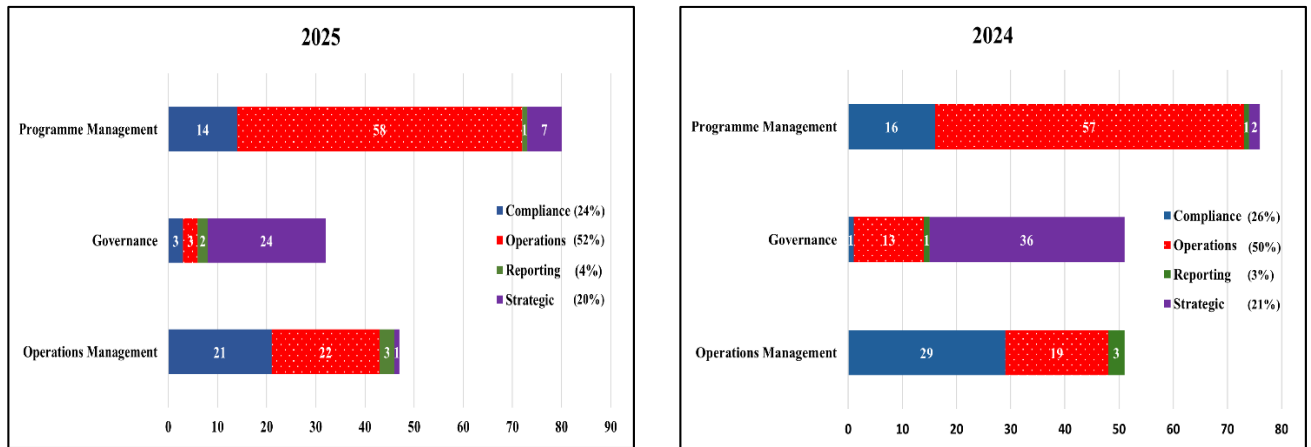
Figure 2. Country and subregional offices – recommendations by priority level



57. OAIS categorizes the achievement of control objectives into four categories: strategic, operational, reporting and compliance. These are based on the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) Framework, an industry standard model for organizations to evaluate and implement internal controls. ‘Strategic’ refers to high level goals aligned with and supporting the organization’s mission; ‘operational’ to executing economical, efficient and effective operations in safeguarding resources; ‘reporting’ to the reliability of reporting; and ‘compliance’ to adherence to corporate regulations, rules and procedures.

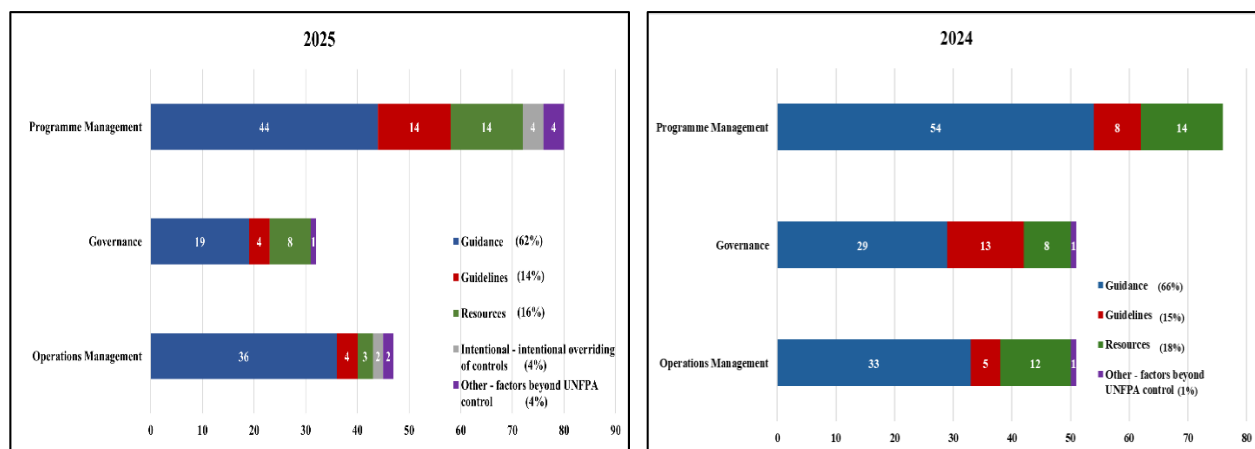
58. The pattern by type showed an increase (in proportion) of ‘operational’ issues and a slight increase (in proportion) of ‘reporting issues’, with ‘operational’ remaining the highest category. The pattern by type showed slight decreases (in proportion) of ‘compliance’ and ‘strategic’ issues in 2025, compared to 2024 (see figure 3 below).

Figure 3. Country offices – recommendations by type



59. By far, insufficient ‘guidance’ remained the main cause of issues, followed by inadequate ‘resources’ (human or financial, including training). Consistent with the prior year, ‘guidelines’ (lack of, or inadequate policies) ranked third but showed a slight decrease (in proportion) in 2025. The proportion of ‘errors’ (human or intentional), ‘other factors beyond UNFPA control’ and ‘intentional overriding of controls’ showed a slight increase (in proportion) in 2025 (see figure 4 below). As part of its regular root cause analyses, OAIS will continue exploring the causes of audit issues.

Figure 4. Country offices – recommendations by cause



60. The two regional office audits concluded in 2025 resulted in eight recommendations, of which three (38 per cent) were ranked ‘high priority’. Five issues were caused by insufficient ‘guidance’, two issues by inadequate ‘resources’, and one was to ‘guidelines’. Since no regional office audit was concluded in 2024, no comparison of patterns is included here.

61. The remaining 36 out of 203 recommendations issued in 2025 were related to business process audits, where patterns could not be established due to the unique nature of the audited areas and auditing procedures followed for each engagement.

### C. Implementation of internal audit recommendations

62. The implementation rate of internal audit recommendations issued prior to 2025 was 95 per cent (92 per cent in 2024). Eighty-three per cent of the recommendations issued in 2025 are due for implementation in 2026 and beyond. UNFPA management agreed with all internal audit observations and recommendations issued in 2025. No recommendations were closed during the year based on management disagreement, risk acceptance, or because they had been overtaken by events and therefore no longer applicable.

63. There were 11 long-outstanding audit recommendations (three in 2024) that were over 18 months old, as shown in table 4. Eight of the 11 recommendations were of high priority, of which six were related to country office audits, and two were to business process audits. Detailed information on long overdue recommendations is in annex 8.

Table 4. Aging status of recommendations, as of 31 December 2025

Priority	Total outstanding recommendations	<12 months	12-18 months	>18 months
High	87	74	5	8
Medium	121	107	11	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>
Due in 2026 and beyond	179	161	18	
Overdue	29	26	2	1

## D. Issuance and publication of internal audit reports

64. All internal audit reports issued against the audit plan for 2025 were publicly disclosed, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2012/18; they are published<sup>14</sup> on the UNFPA audit disclosure website.<sup>15</sup> No requests for redaction of audit reports were received in 2025 from either the Executive Director or the permanent missions of the Member States where the audited country offices are located.

## IX. Investigation activities and results

65. OAIS is solely responsible for conducting investigations into allegations of wrongdoing, including but not limited to:

66. *Internal investigations.* Misconduct by UNFPA staff, interns, junior professional officers, United Nations volunteers and UNFPA service contractors, ranging from fraud and corruption to harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of authority, retaliation, sexual exploitation and abuse, and other violations of applicable regulations, rules and administrative or policy issuances;

67. *External investigations.* Wrongdoing, including proscribed practices and sexual exploitation and abuse committed by independent contractors, implementing partners, suppliers and other third parties, to the detriment of UNFPA;

68. *Third-party-led investigations.* OAIS follows investigations conducted by UNFPA implementing partners, particularly regarding fraud and sexual exploitation and abuse that implicate implementing partner personnel and subcontractors. In addition, OAIS reviews third-party investigation dossiers from other United Nations organizations concerning UNFPA personnel for potential endorsement.

69. The investigation process adopted by OAIS, as previously described (see [DP/FPA/2018/6](#), paragraph 29), did not change in 2025. The process involves the receipt of a complaint or report of wrongdoing, which is immediately screened to determine whether the matter falls within the OAIS mandate. If a matter falls within its mandate, OAIS opens a case during the preliminary review stage. Any matter not opened as a case is deemed a 'non-case' and registered as such. At the preliminary review stage, if a case involves a retaliation referral from the Ethics Office, OAIS immediately opens it in the investigation stage.

70. The full staffing of the Intake and Reporting Unit in 2025 has enabled OAIS to strengthen its intake screening processes and introduce initial advisory and intake consultations for complainants and personnel. During such consultations, the Unit explains the OAIS mandate, information required for a proper intake assessment, and available informal resolution mechanisms. These early consultations help provide guidance and manage expectations, particularly for workplace conflicts that do not meet the threshold of misconduct, making for a more victim-centred approach to investigations. Furthermore, by thoroughly screening matters before determining whether the matter falls within mandate and a case should be opened, the Unit prevents downstream delays and improves investigative efficiency.

71. During the preliminary review stage, OAIS determines whether a reported matter constitutes a prima facie case of wrongdoing.<sup>16</sup> If it does not, OAIS prepares a case closure note and, if needed, sends a referral to the appropriate office to address the issue. If it does, OAIS opens an investigation during which all avenues of inquiry are pursued and available evidence – testimonial, documentary, digital or otherwise – is collected. If, during an investigation, OAIS determines that a prima facie case of wrongdoing can no longer be sustained or that the matter

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<sup>14</sup> Publication refers to the uploading of issued audit reports in the Audit and Investigation webpage of the UNFPA website (<https://www.unfpa.org/audit-and-investigation>).

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.unfpa.org/internal-audit-reports-listing-page>.

<sup>16</sup> The preliminary review is the initial, limited review stage designed to evaluate the credibility, materiality and verifiability of an allegation to determine if it merits a full investigation. The purpose of the preliminary review is to: (a) record and establish the basic facts; (b) preserve or secure basic evidence; (c) identify any inconsistencies or outstanding questions; and (d) analyse the evidence to determine whether further investigative activities into the reported allegations of wrongdoing/misconduct are justified. It typically involves, but is not limited to, conducting an intake and/or witness interviews, analysing documents submitted by a complainant, conducting open-source intelligence research or verifying information received in UNFPA records.

no longer warrants investigation, it may close the matter with a case closure note or closure report and inform the complainant and/or victims of the investigative outcome.

72. At the conclusion of a full investigation process, both the complainant/victim and the subject of the investigation are informed of the investigative outcome. For cases not involving retaliation, if substantiated, the matter is referred to the UNFPA Legal Office via an investigation report; or, if not substantiated, a closure report is retained on file by OAIIS or, if relevant to the organization, a closure report may be referred to the UNFPA Legal Office for information. For cases involving retaliation, whether the allegations are substantiated or not, OAIIS prepares investigation reports and submits them to the Ethics Office. When OAIIS closes a case, it can, if needed, send a referral to the appropriate UNFPA business unit or other United Nations organization to address the issue and/or take further action. OAIIS reserves the right to reopen a case if new information about the allegation(s) is received and warrants reopening the matter.

**a. Case carryover from 2024 and previous years**

73. At the start of 2025, OAIIS carried over 283 cases from previous years, out of which 206 (73 per cent) were in the preliminary review stage and 77 (27 per cent) were in full investigation. In line with harmonized definitions and reporting of the relevant United Nations funds and programmes, of these 283 open cases at the beginning of 2025, 148 (52 per cent) had a primary allegation<sup>17</sup> of fraud and financial irregularities; 61 (21 per cent) had a primary allegation of sexual misconduct (sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual misconduct or sexual harassment); 45 (16 per cent) had a primary allegation of prohibited conduct (abuse of authority, discrimination or workplace harassment); 28 (10 per cent) had a primary allegation of other misconduct/wrongdoing (such as abuse of privileges and immunities, favouritism, unauthorized disclosure and unethical practices); and one case (less than 1 per cent) concerned retaliation.

74. As of 1 January 2025, with reference to the harmonized categories, the 283 carryover cases were at different stages of the investigation process:<sup>18</sup>

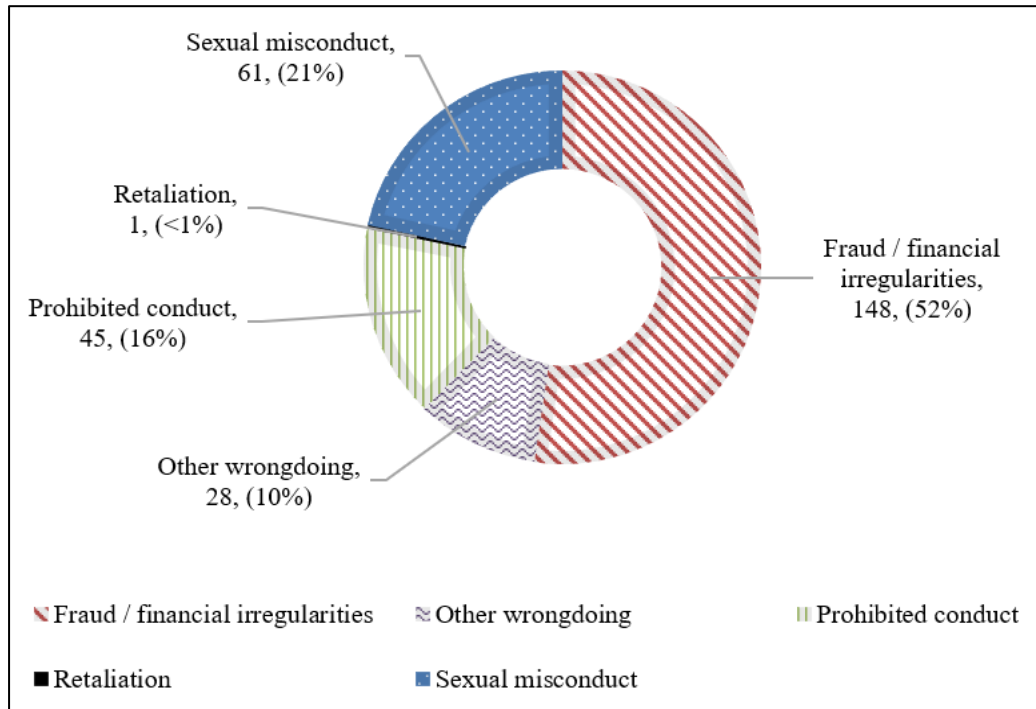
- (a) of the 148 fraud and financial irregularities cases, 109 were in preliminary review and 39 were in full investigation;
- (b) of the 61 sexual misconduct cases, 47 were in preliminary review and 14 were in full investigation;
- (c) of the 45 prohibited conduct cases, 29 were in preliminary review and 16 were in full investigation;
- (d) of the 28 other misconduct/wrongdoing cases, 21 were in preliminary review and seven in full investigation;
- (e) the one retaliation case was in full investigation.

75. Figure 5 below shows a breakdown of cases carried over from 2024 and previous years using the above-mentioned harmonized categories.

<sup>17</sup> A single case registered by OAIIS can contain multiple allegations. OAIIS produces statistics based on the primary allegation listed for each case.

<sup>18</sup> As the 283 cases progressed in 2025, some of their primary allegations (the categorization under which the case is registered) may have changed.

**Figure 5. Breakdown of the 283 cases carried over from 2024 and previous years**



**b. Intake in 2025**

76. In addition to the 283 carryover cases, OAIS reopened a case which had previously been closed in 2024 and registered 342 new matters in 2025. Of these new matters, 208 were registered as non-cases after initial review and assessment. The remaining 134 were opened as new cases (see figure 6 below). The number of new cases in 2025 was consistent with 2024 (134), a decrease compared to figures for 2023 (167) and 2022 (166).

77. Of the 134 new cases opened:

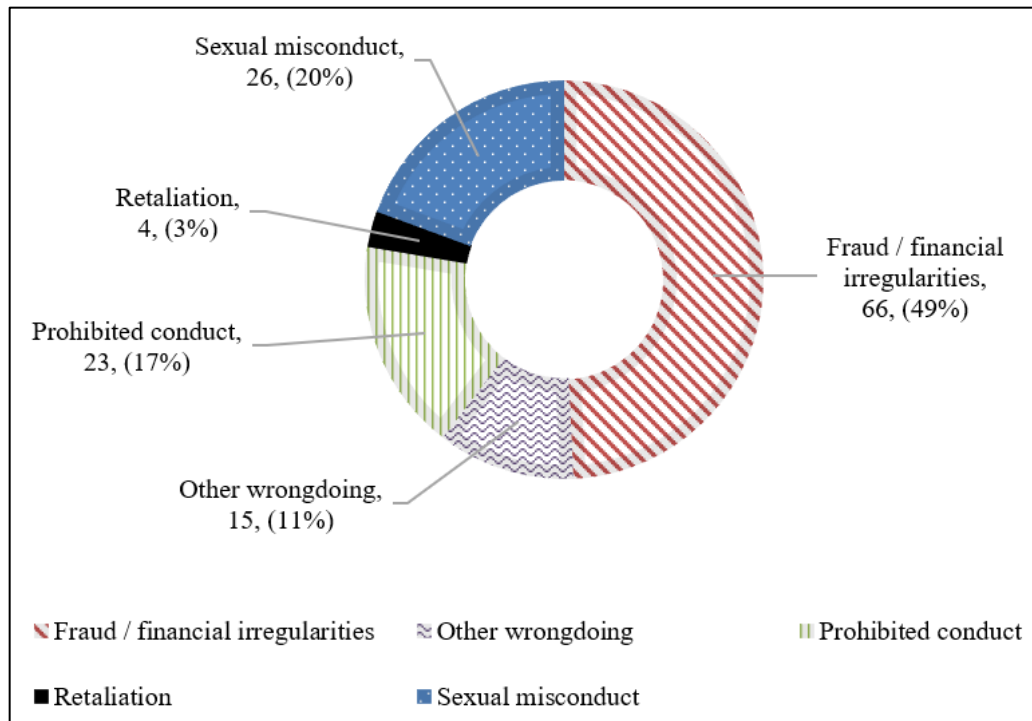
78. 77 cases (57 per cent) concerned internal subjects. These 77 cases implicated UNFPA staff (70 cases, 52 per cent); service contractors (five cases, 4 per cent); one case (less than 1 per cent) in which the contractual status of the UNFPA personnel is unknown (less than 1 per cent); and a United Nations Volunteer (one case, less than 1 per cent);

79. 57 cases (43 per cent) related to allegations against external persons or entities. These 57 cases implicated implementing partners and their staff members (44 cases, 33 per cent); suppliers (five cases, 4 per cent); former UNFPA staff members and personnel (five cases, 4 per cent); a sub-implementing partner (one case, less than 1 per cent); and a consultant (one case, less than 1 per cent); and

80. in one of the new cases (less than 1 per cent), it is unknown if the subject is internal or external to UNFPA. In product/commodity diversion cases, the subject of the allegation is not always immediately clear.

81. Three (or 2 per cent) of the 134 new cases concerned current and former senior UNFPA officials at the P-5 level and above.

**Figure 6. Breakdown of the 134 cases received in 2025**



**Table 5. Case intake category, by year**

Case intake, by category, for 2022-2025				
Allegation category	2022	2023	2024	2025
Fraud and financial irregularities	64	78	72	66
Prohibited conduct	41	30	18	23
Sexual misconduct	26	37	27	26
Retaliation	8	1	3	4
Other wrongdoing	27	21	14	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>134</b>

**c. Case intake at headquarters and by region**

82. Table 6 below depicts the breakdown of cases opened in 2025, compared to 2024, 2023 and 2022, at headquarters and by region.

**Table 6. Yearly case intake, at headquarters and by region, for 2022-2025**

UNFPA headquarters/region	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Number of cases	Percentage of total	Number of cases	Percentage of total	Number of cases	Percentage of total	Number of cases	Percentage of total
Headquarters	5	3	8	5	15	11	12	9
Arab States	33	20	27	16	20	15	19	14
Asia and the Pacific	42	25	48	29	23	17	40	30
East and Southern Africa	31	19	43	26	29	22	24	18
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	12	7	12	7	7	5	17	13
Latin America and the Caribbean	13	8	9	5	9	7	2	1
West and Central Africa	30	18	20	12	31	23	20	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>100</b>	134	<b>100</b>

**d. Total caseload and case closure in 2025**

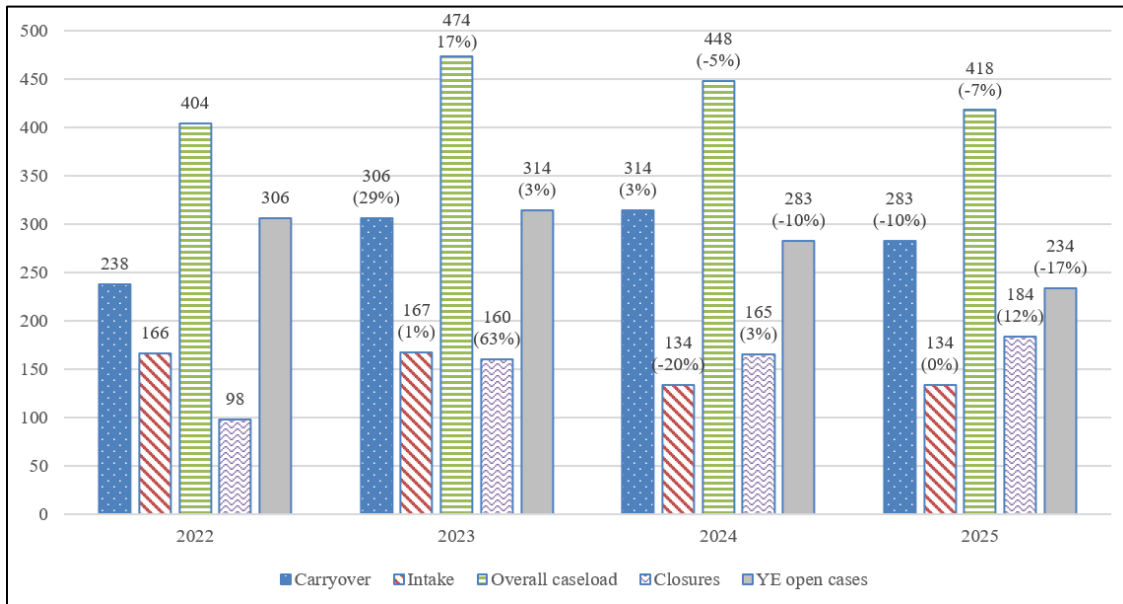
83. In 2025, OASIS had a total caseload of 418 cases (283 carried over from previous years, one reopened case and 134 new cases). This represents a 7 per cent decrease compared to 2024 (448 cases), 12 per cent decrease compared to 2023 (474 cases) and a 3 per cent increase compared to 2022 (404 cases). One hundred and eighty-four (184) of the 418 cases were closed by year-end 2025 (see table 7 and figures 7 and 8 below).

84. Of the 184 cases closed at year-end 2025, 152 (83 per cent) consisted of cases received by OASIS prior to 2025. Of these 184 cases, OASIS fully closed out cases received between 2019-2021: four (2 per cent of the total cases closed) registered in 2019; 11 (6 per cent) in 2020; and 19 (10 per cent) in 2021. In 2025, OASIS also closed 32 cases (17 per cent) registered in 2022, 45 (24 per cent) in 2023, and 41 (22 per cent) in 2024. Thirty-two (32) (17 per cent) of the 184 cases closed in 2025 were received in the same year of closure (2025). The high numbers of closures for both backlog and 2025 cases reflect the continued OASIS efforts and strategy in addressing incoming high-priority cases to prevent a build-up of future backlogs while, at the same time, addressing open cases carried over from prior years.

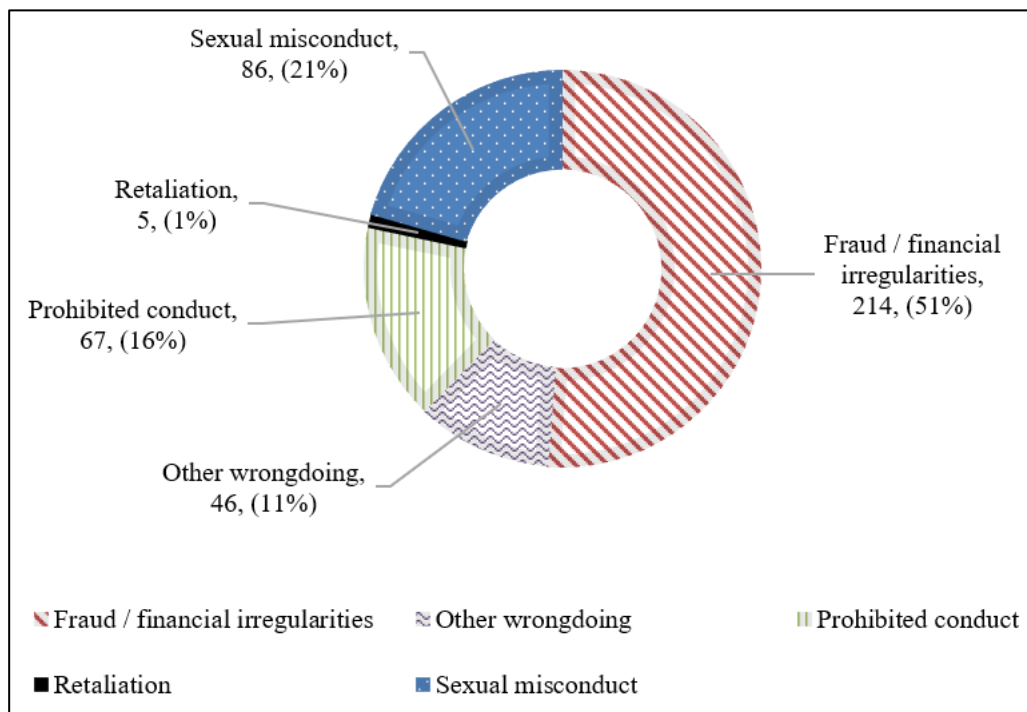
**Table 7. Breakdown of cases handled in 2025**

Status of cases	Number of cases
Carryover, as of 1 January 2025	283
Intake during the year	134
Reopened from previous years	1
<b>Total cases during the year</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Total cases closed during 2025</b>	<b>184</b>
Cases ongoing, as of 31 December 2025	234

**Figure 7. Yearly intake, carryover, overall caseload, closures and open cases**



**Figure 8. Caseload at year-end 2025 (418 cases)**



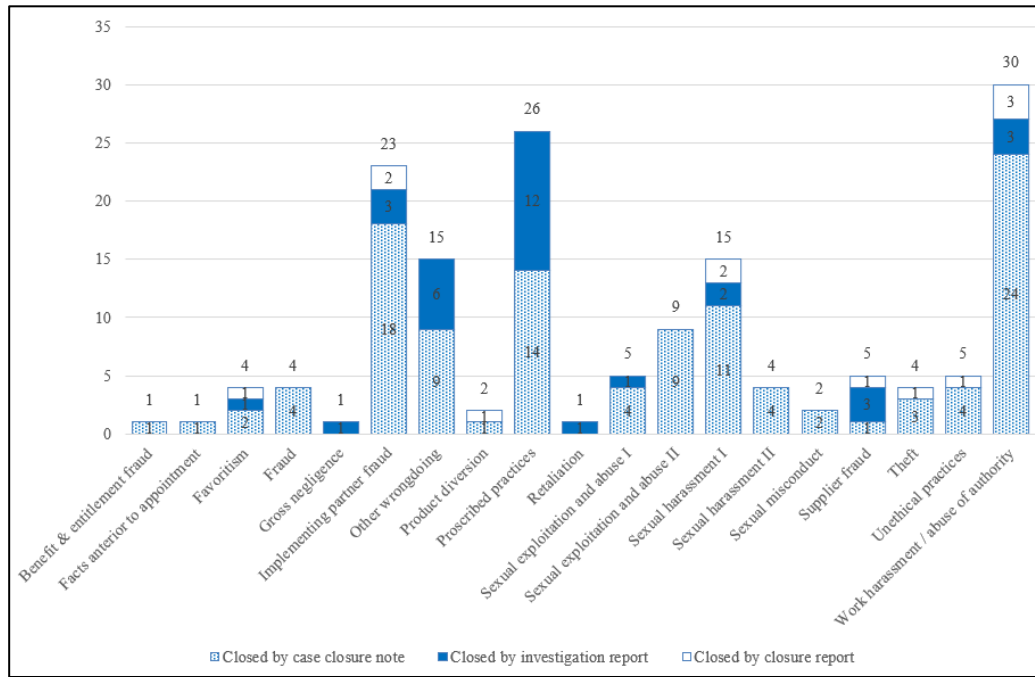
85. Overall, as stated above, 184 cases were closed by year-end 2025. These 184 cases represent sustained improvement from case closures in previous years: 12 per cent increase over the cases closed in 2024 (165), a 15 per cent increase over the cases closed in 2023 (160), and an 88 per cent increase over 2022 (98).

86. Of the 184 cases closed:
- (a) 157 cases (85 per cent) concerned OAIS-led investigations (see figure 9 below), and 27 (15 per cent) concerned third-party investigations in which OAIS reviewed the investigation dossier for possible endorsement (see figure 10 below). Most of these third-party investigations were conducted by UNFPA implementing partners (25 cases), with special audits (two cases) comprising the remainder of these investigations;
  - (b) 135 cases (73 per cent) were closed through case closure notes after preliminary review or prior to the conclusion of a full investigation.<sup>19</sup> These cases encompassed 23 (13 per cent) third-party investigations, each conducted by UNFPA implementing partners, which were closed by OAIS prior to a full investigation and without formal endorsement by OAIS;
  - (c) 49 cases (27 per cent) were closed via an investigation or closure report after a full investigation (i.e., after the subject was notified, all relevant witnesses were interviewed, and all relevant evidence was reviewed – see figures 9 and 10). Of these 49 cases, 45 concerned full investigations conducted by OAIS. Thirty-three (33) of these OAIS-led investigations had at least one substantiated allegation. This represents 18 per cent of the total cases closed and 73 per cent of the full investigations led by OAIS. Twelve (12) of the OAIS-led investigations were unsubstantiated. This represents 7 per cent of the total cases closed and 27 per cent of the full investigations conducted by OAIS. OAIS endorsed two third-party investigation dossiers (1 per cent of total cases closed) following the opening of full investigations. These third-party investigations were conducted through special audits;
  - (d) 19 cases (10 per cent) of the 184 cases closed concerned current or former senior UNFPA officials at the P-5 level or above. Thirteen (13) (7 per cent of the total cases closed) of these cases were closed by case closure note prior to a full investigation, and 6 (3 per cent) were substantiated following a full OAIS-led investigation.

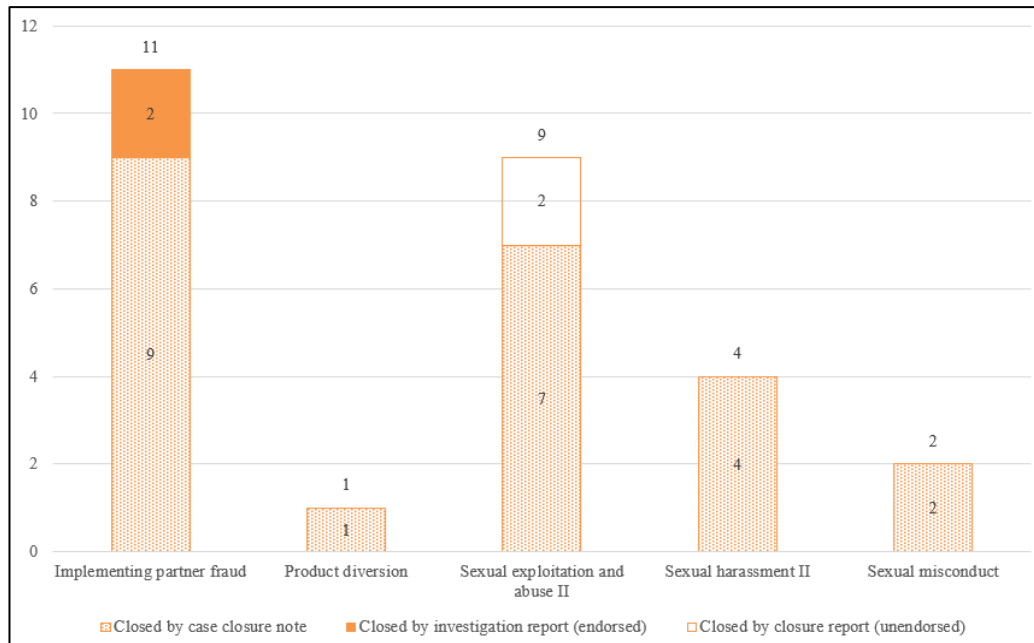
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<sup>19</sup> For cases closed by a case closure note, OAIS collected evidence and determined that:(a) the matter did not fall within the OAIS mandate; (b) there were no reasonable indications that wrongdoing may have occurred; (c) there was no specific information to warrant and form the basis of a formal investigation; (d) the conduct complained of did not rise to the required threshold or meet the definition enshrined in policy; (e) an investigation was otherwise not the most appropriate action; or (f) one or more of the expanded case closure criteria enshrined in the OAIS workplans for 2023 and 2024 applied.

**Figure 9. Breakdown of OAIS-led cases closed in 2025 (157 cases), by category and outcome**



**Figure 10. Breakdown of third-party investigations reviewed by OAIS in 2025 (27 cases), by category and outcome**



87. Of the 49 cases that were closed after a full investigation in 2025, 33 were substantiated in full or in part, and two (2) third-party investigation dossier was endorsed (see figures 9 and 10, table 8 and details in annex 4). For retaliation investigations, OAIS closes the case by submitting an appropriate work product to the Ethics Office for further action, regardless of whether the allegations are substantiated or unsubstantiated. In all other cases, if an OAIS-led investigation results in at least one substantiated allegation, OAIS closes the case by submitting an investigation report to the UNFPA Legal Office for further action. If no allegations are substantiated, the case is closed by OAIS with a closure report (see figure 9 and table 8).

88. In relation to third-party led investigations, OAIS reviews the investigation dossier for possible endorsement. Typically, third-party investigations are closed by a case closure note where they can be endorsed without any further investigation/action needed, or where OAIS is unable to endorse but there are cogent reasons for not opening a full investigation. OAIS opens a full investigation for third-party dossiers when follow-up action is needed, such as OAIS or the third party having to carry out further investigative action, or when considers that the matter should be referred to the Legal Office or Implementing Partner Review Committee (IPRC) (see figure 10 and table 8).

89. Of the 33 substantiated cases and two endorsed third-party investigation dossiers, the primary allegations are broken down as follows:

- (a) most cases (21 cases, 60 per cent) concerned fraud and financial irregularities, which are broken down to 12 cases of proscribed practices (34 per cent), five cases of implementing partner fraud (14 per cent), three cases of supplier fraud (9 per cent), and one case of gross negligence (3 per cent);
- (b) other wrongdoing (seven cases, 20 per cent) comprising six cases of other wrongdoing (17 per cent) and favouritism (one case, 3 per cent);
- (c) prohibited conduct (three cases, 9 per cent), comprising three cases of workplace harassment/abuse of authority;
- (d) sexual misconduct (three cases, 9 per cent), comprising two cases of sexual harassment (6 per cent) and 1 case of sexual exploitation and abuse (3 per cent); and
- (e) retaliation (one case, 2 per cent).

90. Of the cases involving financial matters, which were closed following a full investigation, 12 had financial consequences for UNFPA and, in each case, OAIS was able to determine the estimated loss. The aggregate value of substantiated cases involving a loss for UNFPA, through fraudulent practices or financial irregularities, amounted to \$2,931,265 (see annex 4).<sup>20</sup> Management is pursuing all avenues of loss recovery.

91. At the end of 2025, 234 cases were carried over to 2026 (see figure 11). These cases were primarily implementing partner fraud (60 cases) (26 per cent); proscribed practices (41 cases) (18 per cent); workplace harassment/abuse of authority (36 cases) (15 per cent); and sexual exploitation and abuse (19 cases) (8 per cent) (see annex 5). This represents a 17 per cent decrease in cases carried over compared to the end of 2024 (283), a 26 per cent decrease compared to the end of 2023 (314 cases), and a 24 per cent decrease compared to the end of 2022 (306 cases). The continued decrease in cases carried over to 2025 compared to previous years is attributed to continuous OAIS efforts to deal with the backlog of cases that had accumulated because of an increase in misconduct reporting and prior vacancies in the Investigation Branch.

92. Of the 234 outstanding cases at the end of 2025, 25 (11 per cent) involve cases against current or former senior UNFPA officials at the P-5 level and above. One hundred and sixty (160) (68 per cent) were at the preliminary review stage while the remaining 74 (32 per cent) were at the investigation stage. In accordance with the harmonized definitions and reporting of the funds and programmes, the 160 outstanding cases at the preliminary review stage concerned: fraud/financial irregularities (95 cases) (59 per cent); prohibited conduct (27 cases) (17 per cent); sexual misconduct (26 cases) (16 per cent); and other wrongdoing (12 cases) (8 per cent).

93. The cases concluded in 2025 were closed in an average of 25.2 months from receipt to closure, compared to (27.6 months from receipt to closure in 2024).

<sup>20</sup> OAIS observes that out of the total loss of \$2,931,264.81, there was one major case representing a loss of \$1,441,593 (49 per cent of the total financial losses in 2025), related to fraudulent practices at a former implementing partner.

94. In conducting its investigative activities in 2025, OAIS issued nine (9) requests for placement/extension of administrative leave against UNFPA staff members, which were each approved. OAIS also issued five (5) notices of seizure of ICT equipment and served 34 notices of formal investigation against UNFPA personnel, vendors and implementing partners. It should be noted that issuing notices of formal investigation generally occurs at the end of an investigation and shortly before interviewing a subject of allegations, and not necessarily upon opening a full investigation case. When a case concludes, it may be necessary to share observations, provide recommendations to management or external parties (regarding control issues or best practices) or refer allegations to another entity for investigation or action. In 2025, OAIS issued 14 such memorandums.

**Table 8. Disposition of cases completed in 2025**

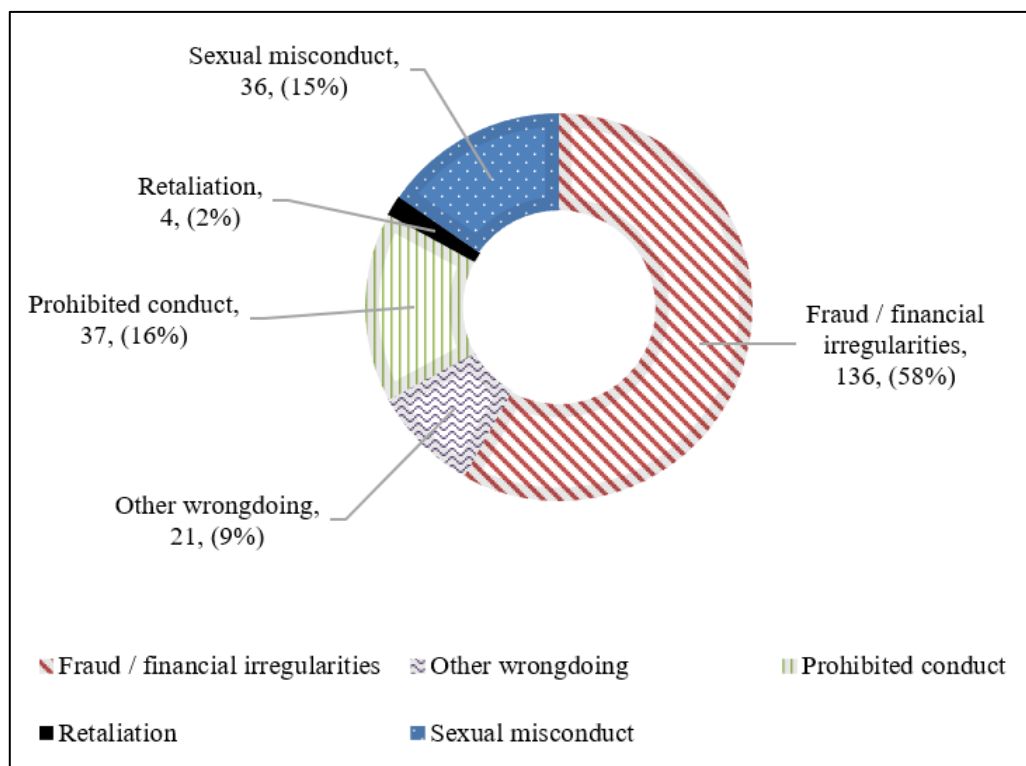
Type of closure	Number of cases
<b>PART 1. CASES CLOSED AFTER FULL INVESTIGATION</b>	
<b>Disposition of substantiated investigations via investigation reports completed by OAIS:</b>	
Submitted to the Legal Office	32
Submitted to the Ethics Office (retaliation)	1
<b>Disposition of third-party investigation dossiers endorsed by OAIS:</b>	
Submitted to the Legal Office	2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Disposition of unsubstantiated investigations via closure reports completed by OAIS:</b>	
Allegation not substantiated / the conduct did not reach the threshold or definition required by the policy	12
<b>Disposition of third-party investigation dossiers not endorsed by OAIS:</b>	
Submitted to the Legal Office or remained with OAIS	2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Total Part 1</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>PART 2: CASES CLOSED AFTER PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT</b>	
Case closure notes following OAIS-led preliminary assessment	135
<b>Total Part 2</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Total cases closed in 2025</b>	<b>184</b>
Referrals/advisory memoranda to other internal/external departments	14*
* 11 of these referrals/advisory memoranda encompassed non-cases.	

95. At the time of writing this report, the status of the 33 investigation reports and 2 endorsed third-party investigation dossiers that were submitted to the UNFPA Legal Office, Ethics Office, IPRC, or Vendor Review Committee (VRC) in 2025 was as follows (see table 8 and annex 4 for details):

- (a) six (6) cases involved UNFPA personnel where disciplinary action was taken:
  - (i) in two cases, the respective staff member and senior staff member were separated from service with compensation in lieu of notice and without termination indemnity;
  - (ii) in two cases, the respective staff members received written censures, with one also receiving a loss of one step in grade;
  - (iii) in one case, the staff member was separated from service with compensation in lieu of notice and termination indemnity; and
  - (iv) in one case, the individual contractor's contract was terminated.
- (b) eleven (11) cases involved former UNFPA personnel whose contracts were not renewed, or personnel who resigned or otherwise separated from service before issuance of investigation reports or during the

- disciplinary stage. A note was placed in their respective personnel files to preclude rehire. Two individuals were added to the United Nations ClearCheck database;
- (c) four (4) cases involving implementing partners referred to the IPRC for decision:
    - (i) in three cases (including an endorsed third-party investigation), the IPRC is in communication with the respective implementing partners to recover losses; and
    - (ii) in one case (an endorsed third-party investigation), the IPRC raised a flag against the implementing partner on the United Nations Partner Portal (UNPP);
  - (d) one case involving an implementing partner and vendors was referred to the IPRC and VRC. The implementing partner was debarred, the IPRC raised a flag against it on the UNPP, and efforts are ongoing to recover losses. The process for VRC review of the case is ongoing;
  - (e) three other cases were referred to the VRC for consideration. The processes for VRC review of the three cases are ongoing; and
  - (f) ten (10) cases involving UNFPA personnel were under consideration by the Legal Office for appropriate organizational or disciplinary decision/action.

**Figure 11. Breakdown of open cases (234), as of year-end and to be carried forward to 2026**



## X. Advisory services rendered in 2025

96. In accordance with its charter, OAIS may provide advisory services to UNFPA management, to the extent that its independence and objectivity are not compromised. The advisory services provided are based on its knowledge of governance, risk management, internal control processes and lessons learned from audits and

investigations. In providing these services, OAIS does not participate in the decision-making process or determine which actions UNFPA should undertake.

97. In 2025, OAIS continued to provide consulting services in diverse business areas, with the following advisory services delivered during the year:

(a) *Advisory reports.* OAIS issued six advisory reports to the UNFPA regional offices, providing regional overviews of recurring challenges, control weaknesses, and areas of good practices identified in assurance and investigation activities conducted between 2023 and 2025;

(b) *Review of funding agreements.* OAIS reviewed and provided inputs to seven agreements in 2025, including requests to review funding agreements involving donors and donor entities;

(c) *Policies and other activities.* To improve the organization's risk management processes, OAIS continued discharging its observer role on the Policy Committee and provided inputs in the review of four policies and procedures;

(d) *Support to UNFPA senior management.* In addition to providing ad hoc advice to UNFPA senior management when requested, OAIS continued its participation, as an observer, in various committees, including the Executive Committee, the Enterprise Resources Management Project Board, the ICT Governance Board, the Humanitarian Steering Committee, the Oversight Compliance Monitoring Committee, and the Policy Committee;

(e) *General support to UNFPA personnel and management.* The support provided included ad hoc requests for information from various business units, responses to requests for assistance received through the corporate integrated service desk, and provision of monthly data for inclusion in UNFPA information dashboards;

(f) *Assessments of UNFPA by external parties and participation in donor visits.* In 2025, OAIS provided inputs in reviews or assessments conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit, including the "Review of donor-led assessments of United Nations system organizations and other oversight-related requests from donors in the context of funding agreements and the United Nations single audit principle" and the "Review of policies and practices to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse in the United Nations system organizations". In addition, OAIS supported a review by the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network that was concluded in 2025;

(g) *Sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.* OAIS continued to provide training support to management and participated in the review of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment clauses in donor agreements;

(h) *Lessons learned from investigations.* As part of investigative activities conducted in 2025, OAIS advised specific UNFPA divisions, branches and country offices on measures to protect UNFPA reputation, programming, funds, beneficiaries and staff members; and

(i) *Participation in regional meetings and workshops.* At the invitation of regional offices, OAIS continued to participate in regional meetings with a view to sharing lessons learned from audits and investigations and to disseminate information on its services. OAIS also took the initiative to brief the regional directors on the results of corporate/business process audits.

## **XI. Oversight, monitoring and coordination of audit and investigation activities**

### **a. Internal monitoring, coordination, and consultation**

98. The Oversight Advisory Committee (OAC) continued to oversee the work of OAIS in 2025 and advise the Executive Director in fulfilling her responsibilities for accountability, risk management, internal controls, financial management and reporting, and the fiduciary oversight process, including external audit matters, the internal audit, investigation and evaluation functions, and ethics. In 2025, the OAC advised the Director of OAIS on the: (a) the 2025 OAIS annual workplan and its implementation; (b) the OAIS budget and staffing; and (c) the OAIS annual report to the Executive Board. Consistent with previous years, the OAC received all audit reports issued by OAIS in 2025.

99. The United Nations Board of Auditors coordinated with OAIS to maximize assurance coverage, avoid duplication of effort, and determine the extent of reliance it could place on the internal audit work of OAIS. In

conducting its annual risk assessment as the basis for preparing its 2025 audit plan and schedules, OAIS coordinated with the Board of Auditors and took into consideration its planned activities and the results of external audit work. In 2025, OAIS implemented one of two audit recommendations previously issued to it by the Board of Auditors and, at the time of drafting this report, was awaiting its closure. Consistent with the practice in previous years, all audit reports issued in 2025 were shared with the Board of Auditors; and, through both formal and informal meetings, consultations were held on matters of mutual interest and significant issues arising from audit and investigation work.

100. As an observer member of the Oversight Compliance Monitoring Committee, OAIS periodically reviewed and validated the adequacy and timely implementation by management of all internal audit recommendations and, where appropriate, closed them. The attendance of the Director of OAIS, in ex-officio capacity, at monthly meetings of the committee throughout 2025 enabled timely review of progress made by management in the implementation of internal audit recommendations and, where necessary, helped provide advice on how to implement recommendations efficiently and appropriately. Furthermore, OAIS discharged its role of validating, for closure, actions taken by management to implement recommendations issued by the Joint Inspection Unit in past reports.

#### **b. External coordination and consultation**

101. In 2025, OAIS continued its involvement in inter-agency activities and meetings on internal audit matters by sharing practices and experiences among the internal audit services of United Nations organizations, multilateral financial institutions, and other associated intergovernmental organizations, such as UN-RIAS and Representatives of Internal Audit Services (RIAS).

102. Similarly, OAIS remained active in multiple inter-agency activities and meetings on investigation matters, including participation in the quarterly meetings of the United Nations Representatives of Investigative Services (UN-RIS), UN RIS-convened working groups focused on specific investigative topics, meetings with international financial institutions and the Conference of International Investigators (CII). As of March 2025, OAIS assumed the coordination role of UN-RIS, which led to new initiatives within UN-RIS to meet the challenges of the current political and funding environment across the United Nations system, including establishment of the Strategic Efficiencies Task Force. OAIS also continued to actively lead and coordinate in sexual misconduct investigative practices, notably the adoption of a victim-centred approach towards sexual exploitation and abuse investigations, including: (a) delivering trainings to multiple New York-based organizations in conjunction with the Office of the Victims' Right Advocate; (b) drafting the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Investigators' Manual: A Victim-Centred Approach to Investigation of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Complaints in 2025; and (c) leading the IASC Investigations Expert Forum on sexual exploitation and abuse. OAIS efforts in the field of commodity diversion, leveraging artificial intelligence (AI), and Open-Source Intelligence, has led to OAIS presenting on best practices in pro-active investigations at the Conference of International Investigators held in China in November 2025.

## **XII. Other activities undertaken in 2025**

103. OAIS undertook several initiatives to improve its visibility and services and to disseminate lessons learned from its audit and investigation activities:

- (a) comprehensively updated its audit manual and standard operating procedures to reflect the new Global Internal Audit Standards – the streamlined audit procedures continued to improve workflow efficiencies, resulting in a record number of audit reports issued in 2025;
- (b) continued issuing its newsletters to keep the organization apprised of its activities and developments in the OAIS professional service areas and other initiatives;
- (c) undertook several initiatives as part of its data management and analytics roadmap launched in 2024, including deployment of AI assistants using Google NotebookLM to extract information from policies and internal audit reports; and development and deployment of a customized chatbot for investigators, leveraging AI-based tools to assist with audit and investigations. This included creating knowledge databases, using AI for process

optimization and analysis, and developing a customized chatbot to research relevant jurisprudence on disciplinary matters from the United Nations dispute and appeals tribunals;

(d) held closed informal sessions with the Executive Board in May and December 2025 to present progress in implementing its 2025 annual work plan, discuss key emerging risks and challenges from audits and lessons learned from investigations in 2025, and highlight the OAIS budget gap for 2026-2029;

(e) concluded two investigations into International Monetary Fund (IMF) employees, following requests from the IMF Office of Internal Investigation in 2024 – these investigations offered OAIS staff further exposure to the work of other organizations and confirmed their professionalism;

(f) actively contributed to discourse and knowledge exchange at the 25th Conference of International Investigators in which three staff members served as panel speakers during case study and workshop sessions leading discussions on the strategic implementation of proactive investigations (leveraging OAIS efforts in commodity diversion) and lessons learned from sexual misconduct investigations;

(g) strengthened OAIS investigative capabilities through open-source training sessions delivered by the Institute for International Criminal Investigations, focusing on practical techniques, core investigation methodologies and ethical practices;

(h) embarked on initiatives to improve the sexual misconduct investigative practices across the sector (as mentioned above) and within the organization. OAIS continued to contribute to the work of the UNFPA Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment Unit. OAIS convened a sexual misconduct team comprised of three staff members, which meets periodically, attends interagency fora and monitors applicable developments or practices in the broader protection from sexual exploitation and abuse community. Six staff members enhanced their investigative skills through the Core Humanitarian Standard Alliance’s Investigator Qualification Training Scheme on sexual misconduct investigations: five staff attained Tier 2 certification and one attained Tier 3 certification. OAIS completed an internal review of the Victim-Centred Approach implementation in its investigations to uniformly integrate the related best practices across OAIS work;

(i) OAIS strong collaboration with investigative offices of donors has helped OAIS investigations and helped preserve donor trust in oversight activities. OAIS held discussions with the investigations offices of two major donors, exploring increased and improved information exchange on allegations and the possibility of joint investigations; and

(j) OAIS conducted several commodity diversion investigations, often liaising with UNFPA country offices, the Supply Chain Management Unit, and local and international authorities, as needed. This reinforced the importance of management-led approaches to commodity safeguarding via prevention and increased monitoring, rather than relying solely on investigation.

### **XIII. Overview of the OAIS Strategy 2026-2029 and the OAIS annual workplan for 2026**

#### **A. OAIS Strategy 2026-2029**

104. In February 2026, OAIS developed its strategy for 2026-2029 to support UNFPA in successfully fulfilling its mandate and implementing its Strategic Plan, 2026-2029. The strategy sets out the OAIS vision, strategic objectives, and supporting initiatives. It will guide the delivery of its mandate while providing the basis for performance measurement. The strategy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

#### **B. Internal audit workplan**

105. OAIS continued to improve its audit risk assessment methodology as a basis for preparing the 2026 annual and the four-year rolling audit plans by: (a) defining the audit universe and disaggregating it into ‘auditable entities’ (business processes and the organizational units that deliver them); (b) identifying and measuring risk factors affecting the auditable entities; (c) prioritizing the outcome using a risk rating based on impact and likelihood, employing four quartiles of risk levels (i.e., high, medium-high, medium-low, and low); (d) accounting for results of external audits and audits/assurance undertaken by business units within the organization, including evaluating

trends in investigation cases filed and completed; (e) considering the assurance needs of stakeholders and decisions of the Executive Board; and in particular (f) refining the quantitative indicators used in the risk assessment to leverage enhanced data sources in Quantum.

106. An updated four-year rolling internal audit workplan for 2026-2029 formed the basis for the 2026 internal audit workplan, which comprises 32 new engagements – eight business process audits (three high risk, five medium risk); one regional office audit (low risk); and 23 country office audits (three high risk, four medium-high risk, nine medium-low risk and seven low risk).

107. In addition, OAIS will continue to prepare summary advisory reports that provide a regional view of recurring challenges, control weaknesses, and areas of good practices based on both assurance and investigation activities conducted in 2025. It will also prepare a capstone review report to identify common themes arising from country office audits that may require systemic solutions.

108. The mix of engagements in the 2026 plans (annual plan and four-year rolling plan) takes account of the requirement for OAIS to:

(a) fulfil and achieve its internal audit strategy, in line with senior management and stakeholder needs and Executive Board decisions and requests to ensure full coverage of the UNFPA audit universe within a cycle not exceeding seven years. To this end: (a) all high-risk business units and processes will be audited every three to four years; (b) medium to high-risk business units and processes will be audited every five to six years; and (c) low-risk business units and processes will be audited remotely every seven years; and

(b) leverage the available staffing or human resources and financial allocation from the institutional budget for OAIS. For the first time in many years, OAIS has a complete fixed-term staff complement for its internal audit team, following successful concerted efforts to recruit appropriate talent. However, there are budgetary concerns that are outlined in section V of this report (OAIS staffing and budget).

## C. Investigation workplan

109. In 2026, the Investigation Branch will focus its efforts on six strategic priority areas for investigative work, to be achieved by 31 December 2026. These priorities build on successes and lessons learned in 2025, as well as the broader investigative landscape, including the number of cases in high visibility country offices, UNFPA humanitarian presence, and the prevailing resource and funding environment. The areas of investigative work are:

(a) *Continued case reduction and targeted investigative action.* In 2025, OAIS significantly reduced its case backlog, closing all remaining cases from 2019, 2020 and 2021, and finalized 49 matters through investigation reports. Building on this progress, OAIS aims to close all remaining 2022 and 2023 cases by the fourth quarter of 2026. It will also target an average investigation closure time of under 12 months and reduce the total number of open cases to no more than 250 at the end of 2026;

(b) *Investigative operations enhancements.* By the end of 2025, the Investigation Branch had a full staffing complement, including an established Intake and Reporting Unit and a newly established quality assurance function. These critical milestones will bolster the efficiency and quality of OAIS investigative work in 2026;

(c) *Systems access and stakeholder engagement.* To achieve its aims in 2026, OAIS will ensure that investigators have access to systems critical to their investigative work. This includes migrating investigative data from the current platform to a new case management system. The migration process will ensure that existing case records are securely transferred and remain accessible. The transition will also leverage the new software's enhanced functionalities to automate internal work processes and track additional data related to post-investigation work, such as donor reporting, management letters and follow-up actions;

(d) *Proactive donor engagement.* OAIS will proactively reach out to investigation offices and/or relevant internal oversight contacts at major UNFPA donors to discuss disclosure preferences. Accordingly, the OAIS primary target of is to formally meet with all major UNFPA donors by the end of the fourth quarter. A secondary target is to develop or adopt a donor disclosure policy, informed by developments at other United Nations organizations, to promote more consistency and efficiency in donor notification;

(e) *Commodity safeguarding transition.* Following the work conducted on commodity diversion in 2025, OASIS will seek a multi-divisional arrangement with other units and partners to enable UNFPA to better combat commodity diversion and prevent or mitigate future risks;

(f) *Incorporating AI in investigative activities.* Drawing on the experience of using AI in 2025, OASIS will continue to pursue the responsible incorporation of AI in its daily investigative work. By the end of the second quarter, OASIS aims to produce a guidance document for investigators on using AI tools within OASIS, while respecting confidential information management

## **XIV. Way forward**

110. The office will continue to streamline its audit and advisory services, building on the successes of 2025, when the timeliness of audit reporting improved tremendously and a record 32 reports were issued.

111. Building on 2025 efforts, OASIS remains committed to leveraging data science to improve its oversight activities. By utilizing advanced analytics, AI and data management techniques, OASIS aims to enhance the precision, scope and efficiency of its audits and investigations, while supporting the UNFPA mission.

112. An external quality assessment of the OASIS internal audit function will take place in the fourth quarter of 2026. The IIA Global Internal Audit Standards mandate the assessment every five years. Passing the assessment is a precondition for using the Standards in internal audit work.

113. OASIS will continue to enhance its investigation capabilities by: (a) investing in advanced investigative techniques and forensic tools to improve the accuracy and efficiency of investigations; (b) strengthening capacity-building efforts for investigation staff; (c) streamlining OASIS investigation processes so they are fit-for-purpose and accord with international standards and best practices; and (d) embedding the quality assurance of investigative output, including through the integration of quality controls in investigative processes.

114. OASIS thanks the Executive Board, the UNFPA Executive Director, senior management and staff who assisted and cooperated with it throughout 2025. OASIS also extends its thanks to the OAC for its continuing support.

115. In 2025, through its responses to audit and investigation reports and advice, and measures taken to strengthen the independence of OASIS, UNFPA management demonstrated its commitment to enhancing the effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes.