

Industrial Development Board**Fifty-second session**

Vienna, 25 to 27 November 2024

Item 12 of the provisional agenda

Activities of the Joint Inspection Unit**Activities of the Joint Inspection Unit****Report by the Director General**

The present document provides information on the activities of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in accordance with the follow-up scheme to recommendations in accordance with decision IDB.24/Dec.11.

I. Introduction

1. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) became a subsidiary organ of the Industrial Development Board by its decision IDB.1/Dec.22. A system of follow-up to JIU recommendations was outlined in document IDB.24/18 and subsequently approved in decision IDB.24/Dec.11. In accordance with the provisions therein, JIU reports will be considered by each regular Board session.

II. Reports submitted by the Joint Inspection Unit

2. Since the previous Board document covering this subject ([IDB.51/21](#)), a total of seven JIU reports¹ were received² by the Organization in 2023 and 2024 respectively. These reports, listed below, are of relevance to UNIDO:³

[JIU/REP/2023/2](#): Review of the internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanisms available to staff of the United Nations system organizations

[JIU/REP/2023/3](#): Review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations

¹ JIU reports and notes, as well as the JIU Annual Report to the General Assembly, in all official languages can be accessed via the JIU website (www.unjiu.org).

² At the time this report was prepared.

³ See conference room paper (IDB.52/CRP.7) for further details.

For reasons of economy, this document has not been printed. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.



[JIU/REP/2023/4](#): Review of mental health and well-being policies and practices in United Nations system organizations

[JIU/REP/2023/6](#): Flexible working arrangements in United Nations system organizations

[JIU/REP/2023/8](#): Review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations

[JIU/REP/2023/9](#): Review of the quality, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of health insurance schemes in the United Nations system organizations

[JIU/REP/2024/2](#): Review of consideration of and action taken on the reports and recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit by United Nations system organizations

3. The present document is supplemented by a conference room paper (IDB.52/CRP.7), which includes hyperlinks to the JIU reports, as well as a hyperlink to the relevant comments on said reports by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). It is recalled that recommendations and statistics applicable to UNIDO are available through the JIU's web-based tracking system (WBTS).⁴ The WBTS also includes UNIDO's compliance and comments on recommendations. A summary of recommendations for consideration by the UNIDO Director General and UNIDO legislative bodies, as well as UNIDO comments on said recommendations, is included in document IDB.52/CRP.7.

III. Implementation of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations at UNIDO

4. As mentioned in previous reports, Member States can be granted read-only access to the consolidated data on the status of implementation of recommendations on the JIU's WBTS. Interested Member States can register with the JIU through the UNIDO Focal Point for JIU matters in the Office of Evaluation and Internal Oversight, via email to eio@unido.org.

5. UNIDO updates the WBTS with pertinent information on recommendations issued in the last three years. This includes information on the recommendations' status of acceptance, the status of implementation and the impact achieved.

6. The status of acceptance and implementation for UNIDO for the period 2021–2023 is presented in the table below. It is shown as a percentage of recommendations issued.

Table⁵
Status as at 18 September 2024

	Acceptance					Implementation			
	Accepted	Not accepted	Not relevant	Under consideration	Not available	Implemented	In progress	Not started	Not available
UNIDO	64.79	1.41	1.41	32.39	0	19.57	34.78	43.48	2.17

IV. Specific Joint Inspection Unit recommendations needing attention by the Board

7. Following an invitation by the Secretariat, a JIU delegation comprised of the Inspector and Acting Chair, as well as one Inspector, joined the sixty-fifth meeting of the informal working group on Programme and Budget Committee-related issues. In her opening remarks, the Acting Chair explained that for the JIU, the rate of acceptance of its recommendations is the primary indicator of the relevance,

⁴ Please refer to paragraph 4 for information regarding access to the JIU WBTS.

⁵ As per information contained in the JIU WBTS.

importance and quality of their reports, and that she was pleased to share that UNIDO is within the average rate of implementation of JIU recommendations. The importance of timely and thorough consideration of JIU reports by governing bodies was stressed, as these form the basis for clear decisions that allow the oversight work to have an impact. The JIU presented its reviews of the ethics function in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2021/5), and of enterprise risk management: approaches and uses in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2020/5). The Secretariat explained that these type of meetings provide a key platform for substantive exchanges between Member States and JIU Inspectors on topics of relevance to the work of the JIU, including to close any gaps in discussions on JIU reports. Feedback on topics to be covered in future meetings of this kind was requested. The JIU encouraged the practice of holding regular substantive discussions on JIU issues and expressed its availability to support governing bodies in exercising oversight and enhancing the accountability of the Organization.

8. In January 2024, the JIU shared its report on the *Review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (JIU/REP/2023/7)*. Following a specific request from the Presidents of the relevant Executive Boards, this review was included in the JIU programme of work for 2023. The objectives were to: (a) assess how the Executive Boards execute their governance and oversight functions; (b) identify risks, gaps, and opportunities between the current practices of the three Executive Boards and the relevant governance and oversight best practices from within and outside the United Nations system, including relevant standards; (c) recommend concrete actions intended to streamline and enhance the governance and oversight processes of the Executive Boards. The JIU developed a benchmark against which the current arrangements of the three Executive Boards were assessed. This comprised six components: (i) Executive Board roles and responsibilities; (ii) Executive Board composition and structure; (iii) Executive Board secretariat; (iv) Executive Board meetings; (v) Executive Board and oversight functions; and (vi) Executive Board and risk management. The JIU Inspector concluded that “with few exceptions, all components need improvement and all key documents related to the governance and oversight roles of the Executive Boards need to be reviewed as do the practices related to the functioning of all three Boards. That will require Member States to recognize their roles and responsibilities as Executive Board members and to reassess current practices in relation to governance and oversight of the five organizations. That must be done with full transparency and led by the Executive Board members themselves.” This review includes 10 formal and 21 informal recommendations that are focused on strengthening the governance of the three Executive Boards, in particular, their oversight functions. It was shared with UNIDO management for further reflection and consideration.

V. JIU programmes of work for 2023 and 2024

9. For 2023, the JIU programme of work included eleven reviews, comprising eight reviews carried forward from 2022 and three new reviews. In addition, the Unit undertook a review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, which was conducted at the request of their Executive Boards, with supplementary funds provided by the related participating organizations.

10. The JIU informed that, by the end of 2023, it overcame the accumulated delays caused by working arrangements during the pandemic and made a concerted effort to complete the reviews carried over from 2022. Furthermore, some of the factors that had caused delays in 2022 were still an issue for system-wide reviews. On the basis

of a recommendation from the JIU's self-assessment, the Unit is reviewing the planning assumptions for each type of review, including the subject, scope and complexity of the review, to ensure more realistic timelines and expectations. The results will inform a more accurate set of assumptions for the time allotted for reviews and inform the Unit's work planning.⁶

11. The JIU programme of work for 2024 includes a total of nine projects, comprising three reviews carried forward from 2023 and six new reviews in the JIU programme of work for 2024. From those reviews carried forward from 2023 and of interest to UNIDO, all of them have been finalized and issued. The new reviews comprise one management and administration review of a United Nations system organization and five system-wide reviews.

12. The below five system-wide reviews are of interest to UNIDO:

- (a) Review of budgeting in organizations of the United Nations system;
- (b) Review of the single-audit principle and the impact of additional oversight requirements by donors;
- (c) Review of the implementation of the principle of mutual recognition within the United Nations system;
- (d) Review of policies and practices to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in United Nations system organizations; and
- (e) Review of the Ombudsman function in the United Nations system organizations.

13. UNIDO continues to note with appreciation the close cooperation between the JIU and the secretariat of the CEB.

VI. Action required of the Board

14. The Board may wish to take note of the information contained in the present document and provide specific guidance on the recommendations addressed to executive heads of United Nations system organizations and legislative and governing bodies, as summarized in conference room paper IDB.52/CRP.7.

⁶ United Nations. (2024). Report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2023 and programme of work 2024 (document [A/78/34](#)).