



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Internal Oversight Service Audit Section

IOS/AUD/2011/15

Original: English

Audit of the UNESCO Libreville Office

December 2011

Auditors:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Results

The Libreville Cluster Office manages a very low level of programme activities and its control framework is weak. The Office has not defined priorities and there has been little success in mobilizing extrabudgetary resources. In the context of the Field Office reform, the scope of the Office may be revised from Cluster to National. Nonetheless, immediate action is needed to restore a sufficient level of IT connectivity, reinforcement of internal controls and human resource management.

Background

1. The UNESCO Cluster Office in Libreville, Gabon was established in 1996 and the current Head of Office (D1) took position in 2006. The Office staff comprises six professionals, three local administrative staff and six SC/SSA contractors (see Annex 1 - Figure 1).
2. The Libreville Office provides UNESCO programme support and representation in three countries: Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe and in some instances also programme support to the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo.
3. The 2010/2011 budget allocation for the Libreville Office totals \$2.8 million in Regular Programme including staff costs of \$1.75 million and activity resources of \$1.05 million. Extrabudgetary activities during 2010 equaled \$110,304 (see Annex 1 - Tables 1, 2 and 3).

Key Achievements

4. In the recent years, the Office has contributed to national and sub-regional initiatives, for example:
 - Establishment of a statistical system to monitor the Education System (2008-2011)
 - Contribution to increase the use of national languages e.g. translation and distribution of National Anthem & Constitution (2010-2011)
 - Establishment of a new Communication department at the University Omar Bongo (2010)
 - Implementation of a WHC transnational project under HQ supervision to improve the management of the protected areas of the Congo Basin (since 2008)

Principal Challenges and Opportunities

5. The Libreville Cluster Office's priorities should be improved to better contribute to UNESCO's overall strategy by:
 - Clarifying its cluster countries scope and enhancing support from SC and SHS sectors
 - Establishing UPCDs for cluster countries and resource mobilization plans

Administrative processes can be strengthened by:

- Improving the monitoring of commitments
- Strengthening contract management, specifically use of Financing Activities Contracts
- Ensuring regular staff appraisal and implementing a staff training plan
- Maintaining an office inventory
- Ensuring optimal and reliable IT connectivity

Objectives, Scope and Methodology

6. The audit objective was to assess the functioning and controls of the Office including reporting and compliance with UNESCO rules and procedures. The audit included activities undertaken from January 2010 to July 2011. The audit was performed in accordance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*.

7. The methodology was based on a risk assessment conducted during the planning phase of the audit and included substantive testing of a sample of projects, contracts, travel and financial transactions. The auditors also interviewed UNESCO personnel, a member of the National Commission and representatives of other UN agencies, and discussed the issues raised in this report with Office managers and staff.

Table of recommendations

OFFICE PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Recommendation 1: The Libreville Office to:

- a. establish UNESCO Country Programming Documents for the cluster countries;
- b. introduce a resource mobilization plan taking into account country-level programming exercises, UNESCO's comparative advantage, delivery capacity and exit strategy;
- c. in consultation with ERI, develop a communications plan and launch a website;
- d. consult with Natural Science and Social Human Science sectors to examine how the Office can be supported in these sectors.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Recommendation 2: The Libreville Office to work with HRM and strengthen its human resources management by bringing staff performance appraisals up to date.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

Recommendation 3: The Libreville Office to strengthen contract management by:

- a. contracting directly with local partners;
- b. reducing advance payment for Financing Activities Contracts;
- c. establishing a commitments monitoring mechanism;
- d. ensuring use of Intergovernmental Body Allocation Contracts for IPDC funded projects and requiring revised workplans

OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Recommendation 4: The Libreville Office to:

- a. in collaboration with BKI, address the connectivity issue and appoint a local IT administrator;
- b. establish and maintain an office inventory of UNESC property and assets;
- c. implement security measures to comply with MOSS requirements;
- d. establish a yearly procurement plan;
- e. regularly communicate travel schedules to BFC and Headquarters Programme Sectors;
- f. use pre-numbered petty cash receipt book;
- g. maintain vehicles logs and review with BFC the retirement of vehicle CMD01.