

**REVIEW OF THE ACCEPTANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION
OF JIU RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE UNITED NATIONS
RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE
REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (UNRWA)**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly of the United Nations has repeatedly noted the importance of enhancing the effectiveness of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and its follow-up system and has reaffirmed that the effectiveness of the JIU is a shared responsibility of the Unit, member States, and the secretariats of the participating organizations.¹

2. In its resolution 54/16, the General Assembly endorsed the proposal of the Unit to establish a system for the handling of JIU reports and recommendations by its participating organizations. The proposal, entitled “Towards a more effective system of follow-up on reports of the Joint Inspection Unit”, was attached as an annex to the Unit’s annual report for 1997.² Subsequently, the Unit undertook negotiation on specific follow-up agreements with the secretariats of its participating organizations, which were ratified by their respective governing bodies between 2000 and 2005. As a subsidiary organ of the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), is bound de jure by resolution 54/16, which endorsed the follow-up system.

3. In 1998, the Unit started tracking the action taken by legislative bodies on its recommendations. That tracking system evolved over the years to a web-based tracking system (WBTS), which was introduced in 2002. The WBTS serves as an online platform allowing participating organizations to access and update the status of consideration of JIU reports and the acceptance and implementation of recommendations. The General Assembly in its resolution 69/275 requests the heads of participating organizations to make full use of the web-based system and to provide an in-depth analysis of how the recommendations of the Unit are being implemented.³

4. The Unit is committed to further enhancing the effectiveness of its follow-up system and therefore decided to include in its programme of work for 2015 a review of the acceptance and implementation of JIU recommendations by its participating organizations during the period 2006-2012. The years 2013 onwards have been excluded from the analysis since it takes some time for reports to be considered by legislative bodies and for recommendations to be implemented by management. All recommendations prior to 2006 had been closed and their acceptance/implementation was no longer tracked.

5. The review is being conducted in two phases. The objectives of the present first phase are to review:

- The acceptance and implementation of recommendations by JIU participating organizations, based on the statistics provided in the WBTS, to prompt action to clear recommendations outstanding for five years or more; and
- The process of consideration of JIU reports by the legislative bodies of organizations in order to identify shortcomings and delays in the process.

6. A questionnaire on the process of handling JIU reports, notes and management letters was sent to the JIU focal points at each organization.

7. The results of the first phase of the review are being presented in a series of management letters addressed to executive heads of participating organizations. The second phase will identify good follow-up practices at organizations and draw lessons to enhance the follow-up process.

8. The present management letter, which is addressed for action to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA includes:

¹ General Assembly resolutions 50/233, 54/16, 62/246, 63/272, 64/262, 65/270, 66/259, 68/266 and 69/275.

² A/52/34.

³ OP.15.

- A comparison of the acceptance and implementation rates for the period 2006-2012 in order to position UNRWA within the spectrum of JIU participating organizations;
- A trend analysis of the acceptance and implementation rates at UNRWA for the period 2006-2012;
- A review of recommendations formulated during the period 2006-2009 still outstanding without any explanation, the acceptance of which is “not available” or “under consideration”, and/or the implementation of which is “in progress”, “not started” or “not available”; and
- An analysis of the process of handling JIU reports by UNRWA.

9. Comments on the draft management letter were sought from UNRWA management and taken into account in finalizing the letter. In accordance with article 11, paragraph 2, of the JIU statute, the present management letter was finalized after consultation among the Inspectors so as to test its conclusions and recommendations against the collective wisdom of the Unit.

II. ACCEPTANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Above-average rates of acceptance and implementation of recommendations

10. At the time this review was initiated in February 2015, UNRWA ranked 2nd in the acceptance and 12th in the implementation of JIU recommendations among all participating organizations and entities considered in our review for the period 2006-2012 (see annex I for more details). UNRWA's acceptance and implementation rates were well above the average of all organizations, as shown by the table below.

Table 1
Rates of acceptance and implementation (2006-2012)*

	UNRWA	All organizations
Number of recommendations	262	7692**
Number of accepted recommendations	239	5000**
Number of implemented recommendations	197	4020**
Rate of acceptance	91.2%	65%
Rate of implementation	82.4%	80.4%

*As of February 2015.

** Number of recommendations multiplied by the number of organizations concerned, to which recommendations are addressed for action.

B. Increasing trend of acceptance and implementation

11. It can be further noted that both the rates of acceptance and implementation of recommendations have increased over the period 2006 to 2012, as shown in the table below (see annex II for more details). **The Inspector commends UNRWA management on these results.**

Table 2
Trend of acceptance and implementation (2006-2012)*

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of recommendations	20	20	38	36	48	64	34
Rate of acceptance	95.2%	95%	68.4%	77.8%	100%	100%	97.1%
Rate of implementation	75%	21.1%	15.4%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*As of February 2015.

C. Higher rate of acceptance of recommendations addressed to the executive head

12. Likewise in most of the participating organizations, UNRWA's rate of acceptance of recommendations addressed for action to the executive head during the period 2006-2012 was higher than the rate of acceptance of recommendations addressed for action to the legislative body. The rates of implementation of recommendations addressed to both addressees were similar. In principle, recommendations addressed to executive heads are more easily accepted and implemented since they do not entail significant policy changes or costs requiring the approval of member States.

Table 3
Rates of acceptance and implementation by addressee (2006-2012)*

	UNRWA executive head	UNRWA legislative body
Rate of acceptance	93.4	86.3
Rate of implementation	82.4	82.6

*As of August 2015.

D. High number of long-outstanding recommendations for five years or more

13. A review of 115 recommendations in 17 JIU reports and notes addressed for action to UNRWA during the period 2006-2009 showed that, at the beginning of January 2016, there were 52 outstanding recommendations for five years or more, for which action should have already been taken by UNRWA to either accept and implement or to reject them. With 44 per cent of the recommendations issued during this period still open, UNRWA was among the organizations with the highest percentage of outstanding recommendations.

14. Most recommendations were pending implementation (82 per cent) by UNRWA secretariat. **Action by UNRWA was requested to clear these long-outstanding recommendations, as applicable.** Five years or more after being sent for action, no recommendation should appear as acceptance “not available” or “under consideration”, implementation “in progress”, “not available” or “not started”. They should be either accepted or rejected and their implementation of those accepted for the most completed.

15. The Inspector noted that as of 2016 relevant JIU recommendations are incorporated into the UNRWA results-based monitoring system (RBM) to monitor their acceptance and implementation. By the time this management letter was finalized in July 2016, UNRWA has taken action to clear all long-outstanding recommendations. The Inspector is pleased to note this effective action by UNRWA.

III. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS BY UNRWA LEGISLATIVE BODY

16. In its response to the JIU questionnaire, UNRWA indicated that JIU reports are distributed internally to relevant departments upon receipt; however, the reports are not disseminated or tabled for consideration by UNRWA legislative bodies since the Advisory Commission, an intergovernmental body composed of 22 member States, has only an advisory role to the Commissioner-General and it is the United Nations General Assembly which is de jure the UNRWA’s legislative body.

17. In this regard, **the Inspector would appreciate receiving an explanation on the discrepancy between the rate of acceptance of recommendations addressed to UNRWA’s legislative body in table 3 above (86.3 per cent) and the rate of acceptance of recommendations addressed to the United Nations General Assembly (61.5 per cent).**

18. We would appreciate receiving a response to this management letter by 31 August 2016.

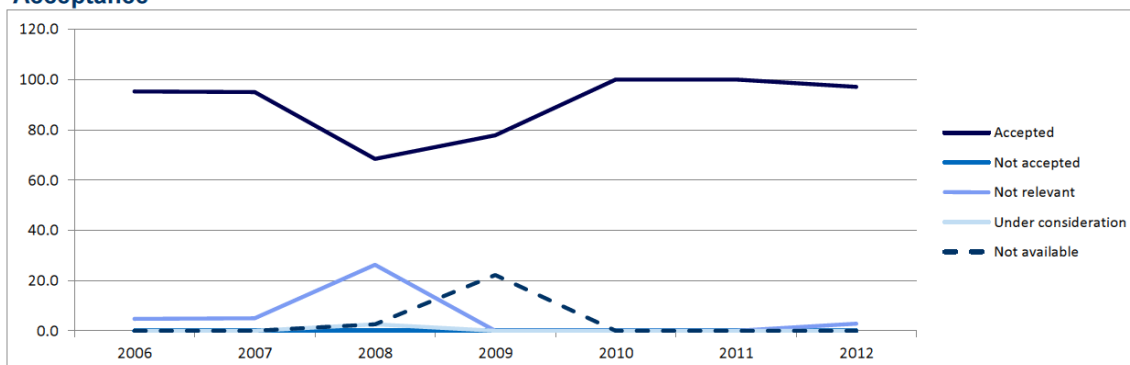
Annex I
Rates of acceptance and implementation by organization (2006-2012),
as of February 2015

	<i>(percentage)</i>		<i>(percentage)</i>
	<i>Accepted</i>		<i>Implemented</i>
FAO	93.7	OHCHR	100.0
UNRWA	91.2	FAO	97.3
WFP	89.6	ICAO	94.1
UNHCR	86.2	WFP	93.4
UNFPA	85.7	WMO	92.8
WHO	83.6	UNIDO	92.6
UNIDO	82.9	UNESCO	90.4
UNDP	82.3	UNHCR	89.2
UNESCO	81.9	WHO	88.3
UNOPS	81.0	UNEP	86.7
ICAO	80.8	UNCTAD	86.6
UNICEF	80.4	UNRWA	82.4
UNEP	78.7	UNOPS	82.0
UNAIDS	77.8	ILO	80.5
IMO	72.8	All organizations	80.4
ILO	68.2	UNFPA	80.1
UN	67.0	WIPO	78.2
All organizations	65.0	UNWTO	73.7
WMO	63.9	UN	69.8
WIPO	56.3	UNDP	69.5
ITU	47.4	UNICEF	66.3
OHCHR	38.5	IAEA	61.3
IAEA	35.3	UN-Habitat	61.2
UNCTAD	32.8	UNODC	57.9
UPU	25.7	IMO	57.2
UNODC	22.4	UNAIDS	51.4
UN-Habitat	19.2	ITC	50.0
ITC	18.2	UPU	46.8
UNWTO	6.3	ITU	46.2
CEB	0.0	CEB	0.0
UN-WOMEN	0.0	UN-WOMEN	0.0

Annex II

UNRWA's trend of acceptance and implementation of JIU recommendations (2006-2012), as of February 2015

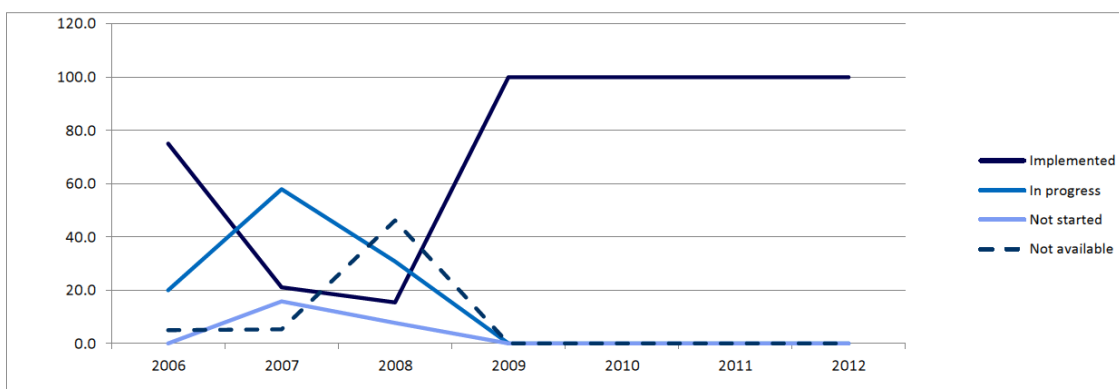
Acceptance



%	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Accepted	95.2	95.0	68.4	77.8	100.0	100.0	97.1
Not accepted	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not relevant	4.8	5.0	26.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9
Under consideration	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not available	0.0	0.0	2.6	22.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

Values	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Accepted	20	19	26	28	48	64	34
Not accepted	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not relevant	1	1	10	0	0	0	1
Under consideration	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Not available	0	0	1	8	0	0	0

Implementation



%	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Implemented	75.0	21.1	15.4	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
In progress	20.0	57.9	30.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not started	0.0	15.8	7.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not available	5.0	5.3	46.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Values	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Implemented	15	4	4	28	48	64	34
In progress	4	11	8	0	0	0	0
Not started	0	3	2	0	0	0	0
Not available	1	1	12	0	0	0	0