Evaluation of the Uganda Country Programme 2016-2018

Final Evaluation Report

External Consultants have prepared this report. The views expressed herein are those of the Consultants and therefore do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of OHCHR.

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Composition of the evaluation team

Evaluation Team

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Acronyms

To increase readability we tried to avoid, as much as possible, the use of acronyms. The following are acronyms often found in use in OHCHR documents.

AWP	Annual Work Plan
CAT	Convention Against Torture
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CMI	Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence
CN	Country Note
CO	Country Office
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DHoO	Deputy Head of Office
DPP	Directorate of Public Prosecutions
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
EOY	End-of-year report
ESCR	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FOTCD	Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Rights
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
HRDs	Human Rights Defenders
HRV	Human Rights Violations
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IDP	Internally Displaced People
JLOS	Justice, Law and Order Sector
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCD	National Council on Disability
NDP	National Development Plan
NEA	National Expected Accomplishment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHRAP	National Human Rights Action Plan
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OMP	Operational Management Plan
PMS	Performance Monitoring System
PPMES	Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Service

PPTA	Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Act
RBM	Results Based Management
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TJ	Transitional Justice
ToT	Training of Trainers
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
ULRC	Uganda Law Reform Commission
UMWA	Uganda Media Women Association
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	UN Development Group
UNDP	UN Development Program
UNEG	UN Evaluation Group
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force
UPF	Ugandan Police Force
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WHRDs	Women Human Right Defenders

Executive Summary

Background

Programme Background

For over two decades, northern Uganda suffered prolonged conflict, and after having experienced several humanitarian, political, and environmental crises over the years, Uganda is now a country "in transition" to full economic, social, and political development. The country is a party to the main international and regional human rights instruments, has an enhanced decentralised governmental system, and has undertaken several constitutional reforms in order to enforce the separation of powers and to restore peace across the country.

In the regional context, Uganda ranks in the middle of the Great Lakes region countries according to main socio-economic and civil and political indicators, with distinguishing features in terms of young population demographics (the lowest median age of the region) and continuing low mobile phone and internet penetration in the country. Pursuant to the goals of the Uganda Vision 2040, the country has adopted several strategies and plans including the Poverty Eradication Action Plans and the National Development Plan. Efforts made so far have had a significant positive effect in key areas of development, thus contributing to the overall modernisation of economic sectors of the country. However, despite major advances, there are still a number of important challenges in the areas of political rights, civil liberties, and economic, social and cultural rights, which require attention.

In 2005, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) established the Uganda Country Office (CO), pursuant to an invitation by the Ugandan Government. The initial mandate of the Office was to monitor the human rights situation in Northern Uganda and Karamoja. In 2009, the mandate of the OHCHR presence in Uganda (OHCHR-Uganda) was extended to cover the entire country. The Host Country Agreement was renewed again in 2011 and in 2014. In May 2017, the Government of Uganda and OHCHR signed a non-renewable Host Country Agreement for a period of two years (March 2017-March 2019). As part of this agreement, OHCHR committed to submitting an exit strategy to the Government of Uganda within six months, outlining activities to be completed by March 2019.

> Note: The field trip happened in November 2018 and the report captures the uncertain situation at the time. The OHCHR Country Office reported that the government had since indicated its readiness to accept a continued presence of OHCHR in Uganda.

Since the establishment of its office in Uganda, the mandate and structure of the Office has greatly shifted from the initial conflict focus. OHCHR has contributed to improving the human rights situation in the country through a comprehensive strategy that includes:

- Monitoring human rights issues with a view to advising the authorities and other relevant actors on the formulation and implementation of policies, programmes and measures to promote and protect human rights;
- Providing technical cooperation to national authorities, the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), and civil society organizations (CSOs) with a view to strengthening respect for human rights;
- Promoting human rights to the general public and disseminating information on international human rights and humanitarian law standards.

Currently, OHCHR has a head office in the capital city, Kampala, and two sub-regional offices in northern Uganda, in Acholi sub-region (Gulu) and in Karamoja sub-region (Moroto).

Evaluation Background

The objectives of this evaluation were to assess the relevance of OHCHR's work in Uganda since 2016, and identify key results achieved by the Office. In particular:

● To identify areas of strength and areas of weakness in the planning and achievement of results, including in the area of gender integration;
● To produce useful lessons learned and good practices that illustrate successful and unsuccessful strategies in the achievement of results; and
● To produce clear and actionable recommendations identifying concrete actions and responsibilities for OHCHR to undertake towards these ends.

The evaluation took place from November 2018 to February 2019, and was conducted by two independent consultants, Silva Ferretti and Joaquín de la Concha. Following an inception phase, the team visited the main office in Kampala and the two sub-offices in Gulu and Moroto. The visits took place from 26 November to 7 December 2018. Preliminary findings were presented in person to Country Office representatives in Uganda, and also shared with the evaluation reference group.

Methodology

The evaluation approach was:

● Learning oriented
● Systematic
● Theory and principles oriented

Information was gathered through a variety of sources, for example, real time data collection and participatory analysis, remote interviews, network and relationship analysis, interactive data visualization, and multimedia presentations.

For the purposes of this evaluation, 78 people were interviewed, through individual face-to-face interviews (32%), individual remote interviews (7%), face-to-face group interviews (32%), and focus groups (29%).

Interviews were semi-structured and brief-based i.e. not based on generic pre-set questions, but tailored to each specific engagement. Interviews led to "rich-conversation" including triangulation and emersion of practices within the engagement. The evaluators also made use of tailor-made methodological exercises to identify the ways in which the Office relates with different stakeholders. Interaction was supported by participatory activities and real time surveys. Two questionnaires were administered, one for the OHCHR Country Office staff and one for national human rights stakeholders. The questionnaires included both qualitative and quantitative questions to assess trends relating to four of the main evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability), and to explore knowledge/ attitudes/ practices and the most significant changes that had occurred.

Throughout the evaluation process, the evaluators sought to examine if and how the programme addressed gender and equality aspects, in its processes, targeting, and impact. Questions and interactions to determine this were included whenever appropriate, and the analysis of relevant programming aspects, such as involvement with Women Human Rights Defenders, were prioritized.

Main Findings

Relevance:

The evaluation found that the programme has been **relevant for all the actors involved** and has engaged positively with a large array of stakeholders, for example with executive and parliamentary bodies, the Judiciary, the Uganda Human Rights Commission, security forces, civil society, donors, media, and the UN. The nature and scope of OHCHR's work in supporting the full spectrum of rights - and OHCHR's competency in fulfilling its role - has been a clear asset. The Office **supported the government** in setting up human rights committees in several institutions and bodies, in order to meet the country's human rights obligations. **Engagement with national institutions** (for example, the National Planning Authority, in collaboration with Uganda Human Rights Commission), supported the incorporation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) in the implementation of national instruments, such as the National Development Plan. The programme also had significant engagement with **civil society** actors, in particular with Human Rights Defenders, which is essential to ensure that changes in norms will eventually trickle down to citizens in practice.

Given that relevance rests on strong **contextual analysis,** the evaluation suggested options to further improve OHCHR's systems for analysis. Suggestions include the establishment of stronger processes to consolidate information on the human rights issues in the country collected through different sources, to exchange this information across thematic areas of the Country Office and to feed this into decision-making processes. There is also a need to make more explicit the risks, trends and opportunities for the future of the programme.

A strength of OHCHR has been its capacity to be responsive, in seizing opportunities for action (e.g. the work with persons living with albinism), or on stepping up analysis and engagement on emerging issues (e.g. the work on human rights and business). This builds on a clear commitment to identify groups at risk to be marginalized and on a willingness to consider multiple factors in the Office's analysis of national capacities and vulnerable groups. There is however potential for the Office to further strengthen its **capacity for vulnerability and power analysis**. This should be accompanied with processes for prioritization, planning and budget allocations to systematically address specific vulnerabilities in the future. The Office's capacity to have a bird's eyes view of the whole spectrum of rights enables it, in a unique way, to identify specific areas of need, which would otherwise fall through the cracks, and to advocate for support and action on these. OHCHR also has a role to play in **complementing and identifying gaps** in existing programmes for groups covered by other initiatives (e.g. the refugees, with a focus on those outside the mainstream system) and in supporting groups that are side-lined in decision making processes to ensure that no one is left behind such as youth.

Field offices were established as part of the past engagement of monitoring in Northern Uganda and Karamoja. OHCHR then serves other areas through deployments from Kampala. The relevance of the existing field offices is now uneven: Gulu, where there are few activities and minimal engagement with local actors, is not as relevant as Moroto – whose importance was highlighted by local stakeholders. The evaluation considers it key to reflect on the rationale and role for the presence: why they do exist in

some places and not in others is a question that should be thoroughly backed up with a strong contextual and strategic analysis.

Effectiveness:

OHCHR Uganda has set for itself an ambitious set of **outcomes vis-à-vis OHCHR's global thematic priorities** (widening democratic space, human rights in development and the economic sphere, countering discrimination, combating impunity and strengthening accountability and the rule of law as well as international human rights mechanisms). The Country Office monitored them through OHCHR's **Performance Monitoring System** (PMS).

For the purposes of this evaluation, PMS was used as a reference. Rather than duplicating the M&E work already done by the Office, the evaluation sought to gauge the capacity of the system to effectively capture and account for the outcomes. Doing so revealed a high degree of subjectiveness of the assessment - to which lack of baselines and the wide array and scope of challenges of human rights work at the national scale and its evaluability had contributed.

Effectiveness was also gauged by identifying a set of activities (collaboration and partnership, capacity building and communication) that cut across and contribute to all outcomes. It was then possible to explore the effectiveness of OHCHR Uganda in addressing them, leading to very concrete insights and suggestions.

With regards to **collaboration and partnership with local actors,** the evaluation highlighted the increased collaboration between OHCHR and the Uganda Human Rights Commission – which is particularly strong at field level – and mutually valued for provision of resources and capacities, especially regarding emerging issues. Limitations were found to be mostly linked to the UN bureaucracy. In particular, the evaluation explored engagement with the Justice, Law and Order Sector (**JLOS)**, and noticed that conceiving JLOS as one group of actors tends to blur strategies: their diverse and complementary roles should be spelled out more. The evaluation also looked at the coordination with **civil society actors**, and witnessed effective targeting and interactions with umbrella organizations - but also encountered demands for a broader outreach, for example by local coalitions at the regional and district level. There were also demands, by all actors, to strengthen **regional coordination** (including networking outside of Uganda) to better tackle issues where root causes extend across countries, and to share strategies for action, recognizing that regional instruments might sometimes be the best option for action. Engagement with **traditional leaders** was overall limited, but given their key role in Uganda communities, it would demand more structured action.

The evaluation also commented on OHCHR's success in setting **platforms** for discussion and action across diverse actors at the local level in cases like the Karamoja Regional Protection Meeting or the District mineral watch platform in Moroto. Nevertheless, there exists considerable demand for more engagement in a leading role in coordination with civil society actors or in donor meetings or even in other district coordination meetings with the judiciary and government institutions). One challenge, however, was the shifting role of OHCHR - from its engagement at the time of a crisis to its work within a transitioning country. This required **adaptation**, which was not always clearly conveyed to or understood by all partners. Even several UN agencies are misinformed about the role and capacities of OHCHR, which calls for investment in a clearer communication and repositioning.

Technical cooperation has been one of the main areas of engagement for OHCHR. The evaluation looked specifically at the modalities in place for **capacity building** and training, with these being the

main avenue for support. Significant impact was revealed - and this was particularly evident when exploring support to Human Rights Defenders (HRDs): not only were skills gained, but they were also applied, leading to concrete changes and to attitude shifts for positive engagement between the government and HRDs. The need for **alternatives to conventional training formats** emerged, together with potential options (e.g. use of new technologies or skill share formats). Interviewees indicated the need to inform trainings with stronger and more participatory capacity assessments, to better adapt content to diverse audiences, to foster dissemination and replication, to support networking amongst participants, and to share learning rather than emphasize teaching.

The Country Office is already conscious of its limitations in supporting **communication.** Information sharing took place mainly through UN channels, without necessarily reaching the broader public. Internet and social media channels are used to a minimum. Some engagement with the press had occurred - in the form of publications in newsletter supplements and in engagement with journalists through training. Limited emphasis on communication, affected the Office's effectiveness in particular with regards to sharing achievements and spreading learning and good practices for the support of human rights. This affects the Office's potential in terms of sensitization, advocacy, and outreach. The evaluation identified three areas for investment in communication: **engagement with traditional media**; **communication for outreach** - requiring investment in new formats, channels and languages; and **communication for deeper accountability**, whereby citizens are sensitized to national instruments and provisions, and conditions are created for their empowerment in order to monitor fulfilment of rights and provide increased access to options for redressal.

Efficiency:

The evaluation assessed the efficiency of the CO Uganda, looking at 3 main areas (operational management, cost-effectiveness, and results-based management and budgeting).

In terms of **operational management**, CO Uganda is governed by UNDP financial and procurement policies and services. On the one hand, these allow for the sound tracing of all expenditures and for thorough financial cross-checking. On the other hand, these processes are not always adapted to fit the local context and the needs of CO Uganda in terms of time frames, payment procedures, and human resources processes. These limitations are the cause of several shortcomings in the financial operation of the intervention and contribute to a certain negative perception from key stakeholders of the Office.

From the **cost-effectiveness** angle, the budget plan assessment shows a global adequate budget distribution per pillar and between target groups with 61% of the budget devoted to cooperation with state institutions. In the future, specific budget lines should increasingly be set aside for work with vulnerable and marginalised target groups. In addition, based on efficiency decision-making methods, the use of other implementation alternatives should be explored especially within the UN spheres.

Finally, regarding **results-based management and budgeting**, the annual work plan process requires activity-based budget plans that allow for aggregation at the results level. However, this is not coupled with financial monitoring at the results level. In consequence, the whole financial system is not currently set up reflecting the correct result-based budgeting features of logically framed budget, justification of resources by results and infusion of performance measurement into decision-making processes.

Impact orientation:

The evaluation recognized the challenges in assessing and attributing impact for a broad national programme on human rights and looked at the existence of processes and strategies to steer towards

impact. Related issues of evaluability were also explored in depth. The country office refers to the overall OHCHR theory of change for strategic orientation. However, the Uganda office has not taken strong ownership of and has not contextualized this theory of change. It tended to be used as a set of targets rather than as a systemic tool to orient action. OHCHR staff clearly operates with strategic intent, and they also promoted participatory processes of review and reflection with other key stakeholders for strategic action. However, the systems in place - such as the formulation of Country Programmes and Annual Work Plans in the Performance Monitoring System - are ill-designed to capture strategies, and they absorb a considerable amount of time and attention of the staff at the expense of other possible strategic processes. The evaluation observed, for example, that whilst the office is already tracking changes in systems and legislative frameworks, it has not made available a full analysis of the pathways for change that eventually will lead to changes in the lives of citizens. If such pathways are not locally expressed it is then much harder to appreciate progress and impact as well as to envisage the support needed by national actors to follow up and ensure that the legislations, policies, and frameworks established translate in actual realization of rights for the most vulnerable. Some options to improve impact orientation are already in place and could be improved. For example, participatory strategic planning and periodic reviews, as well as staff rotations for exposure to other tasks and engagements. Other measures worth exploring - oriented to explore and support the pathways for human rights realization - could include: support to citizen-oriented accountability measures, pilots and case studies, and spot-checks looking for impact orientation of specific interventions.

Sustainability:

The evaluation examined different dimensions of sustainability: structural changes, organizational systems and capacities. **Structural changes** have been a strong and integral component of OHCHR work. Interviewees agreed that OHCHR had contributed to stronger foundations for human rights, by incorporating HRBA and SDGs in national plans and strategies - for which Uganda has actually been at the forefront. A suggested area for improvement would be a more strategic focus on identifying key actors and areas for engagement, within the broad human rights spectrum.

OHCHR has contributed to **organizational systems,** for example with the establishment of databases: one for state actors to track the implementation of Human Rights recommendations, which is still at an early stage, and one for civil society actors to support monitoring of human rights cases, which has been very well received by the actors involved. The Office has also set calendars of obligations with deadlines and requirements of international processes. A revised checklist to make legislation right-compliant was being finalised as the evaluation happened. All these systems have the potential to contribute to the sustainability of human right work by national actors. However, the actual effect in terms of strengthening the local stakeholders was hard to gauge as most initiatives were still at early stages.

The importance of investment in **capacities and attitudes** of national actors has been already recognized. Sustainability might be challenged by staff turnover issues of these national bodies, and many emphasized the importance of follow up, to refresh and update knowledge.

Beyond the need to ensure sustainability, the importance of a future orientation emerged. This includes the need to "future proof" achievements, in the context of potential instability, by strengthening risk assessment and preparedness components. Some elements of the *risk management cycle* (response, prevention, and mitigation) could be identified in the programme of OHCHR-Uganda, but not in the form of an explicit, systematic risk framework.

OHCHR addressed issues of **women/men equality**. The Office consistently checked policies and legislation through these lenses and promoted gender budgeting. This was done in synergy with national actors, for example, with the Equal Opportunities Commission. OHCHR also directly promoted **work on women rights**, specifically with Women Human Rights Defenders, which opened a much-needed space in which to address challenges faced by women. In addition, the Office supports access to formal justice systems for survivors of violence. This form of engagement needs to be closely monitored, in order to learn about its viability and to reduce potential risks for the survivors, for example, in case their claims are refuted.

The capacity of OHCHR's own office-wide **internal systems** to track gender issues needs to be improved. The PMS has limitations in tracking gender issues, and data is insufficiently disaggregated (or, when it is available, little evidence of use in decision making processes emerged).

LGBTQ+ rights are also an integral facet of gender, but a challenging one in this context. OHCHR managed to tackle this aspect with the needed sensitivity.

Lessons learned

The evaluation identified a wealth of lessons learned. The ones presented below have been chosen as the most relevant and replicable:

- **Results based management, alone, does not allow to capture the full impact of the programme and to effectively harvest and share practices.** OHCHR has acknowledged the importance of "theory of change approaches" in its recent global operational plan. A system oriented approach to planning and management should be promoted, with an appreciation of **complexity paradigms, and of the relevance of *processes* of change and of adaptive dynamics**.
- **Ensuring OHCHR's continued presence in post-conflict situations can make a difference for local actors, in several necessary areas of engagement.** This includes identifying emerging issues through an assessment of post-crisis challenges, monitor towards reconciliation, and support on long-term trauma.
- **Supporting coordination mechanisms for local actors in human rights issues in a post-crisis setup provides needed platforms, leading to practical action on rights.** Such mechanisms do not need to be created ex-novo, but might evolve existing setups, as such as cluster coordination.
- **The strategy of a field presence should be continuously reassessed to maintain its relevance.** The current field presence is a legacy of the initial mandate of OHCHR. The evaluation noticed that a field presence, when not reassessed strategically and the findings of such reassessment adequately communicated, might see its relevance affected. Clarity of strategic purpose for the field presence, linked to a strong acknowledgement of local context and capacities, is key.

Conclusions and recommendations

There has been strong and positive acknowledgement of the value of the collaboration in Uganda. OHCHR should continue to build on this with clear strategies. Strengthening its collaboration with local stakeholders would place OHCHR as the linchpin of the **triple nexus between humanitarian,**

development and peace actors and the **mainstreaming of human rights-based approaches across UN agencies.**

Conclusion: The current investment in communication of its work in the Uganda Country Office is insufficient, and OHCHR is already aware of the need for an increased focus on communication. OHCHR has the possibility to strengthen communications about its programmes for greater accountability towards citizens.

Recommendation 1:
OHCHR Uganda should improve its capacity for communication through:—*(i) Undertaking stronger engagement with traditional media, while at the same time making use of innovative options for communication, such as the use of new communication formats and platforms; (ii) Firmly integrating communication in technical assistance programmes for ensuring transparency and accountability towards citizens, in particularly the most marginalized ones).*

Conclusion: The predominant focus of the Uganda Country Programme so far has been on supporting the establishment of national instruments (policies and frameworks) on human rights issues. The evaluation identified a gap in terms of mechanisms for accountability towards citizens in the context of these instruments.

Recommendation 2:
The Office should strengthen its support to national actors in establishing accountability practices in the context of national human rights instruments and frameworks (in particular for the most marginalized groups).
This includes:
  (i) ***Support the creation of accountability ecosystems (including civil society, citizens, traditional leaders) to better track and communicate*** *progress in implementation of national human rights instruments and frameworks - including through sharing of achievements and creation of spaces for discussion.*
  (ii) ***Leading by example****: OHCHR should commit to **continue improving its own communication and accountability with citizens, and clarifying its role and responsibilities***

Conclusion: Sustainability is at the core of the Uganda Country Programme. OHCHR has been working for rights to be structurally embedded in the policies and frameworks of national institutions. It has strengthened capacities to sustain its work on human rights issues through investing in systems and skills. Sustainability might further benefit from investment in risk management to anticipate potential risks to human rights, in particular for the most vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Recommendation 3:
The future orientation of the Uganda Country Programme should be strengthened through systematic identification of opportunities and through better risk management.
Strategies and plans need stronger future orientation. This might include:
  (i) *Better exit or handover plans for specific initiatives;*

(ii) Identification of opportunities of engagement in emerging human rights issues and, in this context, clear modalities for upscale and uptake; and

(iii) Stronger risk assessment and management. Elements of the risk management cycle (response, prevention, and mitigation) have already been incorporated within OHCHR Uganda's programme. These could be made more explicit and better integrated in a systematic, inclusive risk framework.

Conclusion: The Uganda Country Programme lacked capacity to capture and share its different models of intervention in support of human rights. Learning mechanisms –to make explicit, consolidate and share practices - were weak overall. This is a lost opportunity, as interesting practices emerged, which were worth sharing in the country and abroad. There is also a strong but unmet demand - by OHCHR staff - of learning from other OHCHR field presences.

Recommendation 4:
The Uganda Country Office should have a stronger focus on learning.
This includes:
(i) Identifying, documenting and disseminating successful models of intervention.
(ii) Strengthening options for dissemination by exploring diverse possibilities, such as social media engagement, linkages with local umbrella organizations, peer dialogues and network creation.
(iii) *Engagement with participatory processes involving multiple stakeholders for learning and with a strong focus on communication for accountability, including at the regional level.*

Conclusion: Technical assistance - and training in particular - has been a strong component of OHCHR Uganda's work. Participants highlighted that it has been useful and valued. However, they also noted very concrete options for improvement in light of the evolving context in the country. This includes recognizing that local actors are becoming more aware of rights issues and better equipped to address them.

Recommendation 5:
The Uganda Country Office should re-think its approach to capacity building activities.
This should take into account the following:
(i) Capacity building initiatives should be based on stronger existing capacity assessments of partners and stakeholders, and there should be a stronger investment in linking the results of these assessments to programming.
(ii) Training should evolve beyond traditional formats, to emphasize participation, including in design, setup and delivery with a focus on spreading learning developed in country and fostering experience sharing and peer capacity building to increase rootedness and relevance.
(iii) Integrating learning into programme design and implementation should be integral part of the future approach to capacity building.

Conclusion: The importance of strengthening regional engagement of the Uganda Country Office emerged, both for tackling root causes of (potential) violations and for devising options for resolution.

Recommendation 6:
The Uganda Country Office should strengthen the regional aspects of its work, with an emphasis on the use of regional instruments and support to regional stakeholders' networks for better coordination on common human rights concerns.

For OHCHR Headquarters (and Uganda Country Office):

Conclusion: Limitations in data management access and use of data have been evident throughout the evaluation. This concerns all aspects of the Country Office's work including needs assessments, monitoring activities, systematization of evidence, and disaggregation of data in terms of vulnerable groups.

Recommendation 1:
OHCHR Uganda should invest in stronger approaches to data management, access and use.
This should be done through:
- (i) *Supporting approaches promoting generation and use of "open data" (taking into account security and data protection issues to address the sensitivities of some types of information).*
- (ii) *Including online platforms to make information available to stakeholders (e.g. when working with the government to ensure accountability, or supporting civil society initiatives for evidence-based advocacy).*

Conclusion: Even though some of the problems may be mitigated by the new UN system wide rules, financial and procurement processes in the Uganda Country Office are not adapted to the context and needs of the office, and have caused several instances of friction, as pinpointed by stakeholders.

Recommendation 2:
OHCHR Uganda should adapt operational management in line with the nature of OHCHR's mandate.
- (i) *The Uganda office, through OHCHR headquarters, should look at ways to adapt and/or adopt more appropriate financial and operational systems that are more in line with the nature of OHCHR's mandate.*
- (ii) *It is therefore recommended that OHCHR Uganda shifts from a development cooperation procurement based rationale to a rationale entailing a swifter and more flexible modality of operation.*

Conclusion: Current practices in the Uganda Country Office demonstrate a lack of input of financial information into decision-making processes, thus hindering evidence based financial decision-making.

Recommendation 3:
The Uganda Country Office should establish result-based management and budgeting principles (evidence based financial decisions).
- (i) *The PMS system should be upgraded to allow the aggregation of financial information at the output and outcome levels.*

> *(ii) Budget information at the activity level in the PMS should be categorised by assigning identifiers ("tagging") according to all relevant variables for decision-making (e.g. thematic areas, vulnerable groups, type of activities, etc.).*
>
> *(iii) PMS or another relevant system should include up to date financial information (e.g. monthly financial reports) showing up to date expenditure rates.*
>
> *(iv) Finally, financial data and input by colleagues working in finance should be an integral part of the programmatic decision-making process.*

Conclusion: Work on human rights requires a careful assessment of factors leading to discrimination. While OHCHR-Uganda has in the past identified specific categories and groups (e.g. people living with albinism, survivors of torture and violence against women) and tailored actions for them, the Office could play an even stronger role in identifying specific forms of exclusion that might go un-noticed.

Recommendation 4.
OHCHR Uganda should foster a truly inclusive approach in its Programme.
> *(i) OHCHR should continue to foster its capacity for multi-factor analysis of exclusion, and build this more strongly and consistently within its systems.*
>
> *(ii) This should involve a better use of evidence and disaggregated data, and an explanation of the diverse dimensions of discrimination that the office already bears in mind, but which are not systematically captured.*
>
> *(iii) Finally, OHCHR should continue to ensure that its use of 'gender' does not imply binarism and to raise awareness of the issue with other bodies.*

Conclusion: There is a lack of understanding of OHCHR's theory of change in the Uganda Office. Rather than working towards the Office's objectives in a holistic way, the Office is working towards the different pillar results of the country programme in an isolated manner with little attention to interlinkages between the different results to be achieved.

Recommendation 5:
OHCHR Uganda should ensure that OHCHR's theory of change is truly understood and owned by its staff.
> *(i) OHCHR should promote a strategic thinking culture in all its processes (planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation), by bringing together teams and topics so that OHCHR's theory of change is addressed in its whole rather than through individual pillars.*
>
> *(ii) OHCHR should ensure that staff better understand, appreciate and use OHCHR's theory of change and roadmap (as stated in the OHCHR operational management plan).*
>
> *(iii) Efforts should also be made to encourage communication of the theory of change to partners, to better align efforts.*

Conclusion: As Uganda transitioned from crisis, there have been increasingly diverse perceptions regarding OHCHR's role and mandate. This has created friction with stakeholders, which in turn has had a major impact on the effectiveness of the Country Programme. The evolving role of OHCHR within the country has not always been clearly conveyed to or understood by local and international actors - including the UN - and this has considerably affected its actions.

Recommendation 6:

OHCHR should provide more clarity regarding the purpose of the Uganda Country Office and its mandate, and a strong, clear positioning of the Office should be ensured.

    (i) OHCHR Uganda should invest in clarifying its role and added value through an internal reflection process and in repositioning itself accordingly.

    (ii) OHCHR Uganda should position itself at the very centre of the UNDAF process. It should harness its added value as the UN agency supporting the Universal Periodic Reviews and international treaty bodies, the recommendations of which should form the entire development agenda.

    (iii) Such a focus would ensure that the Uganda Office can play a role coherent with its area of strengths regarding the triple nexus (the nexus between humanitarian, development, and peace). This includes its convening power within and beyond the United Nations, recognized expertise in human rights issues, and the capacity to appreciate rights in their entirety.

Introduction

Background

Programme background

This section builds on the background provided in the TORs - which very effectively captures the evolution of the country programme from the perspective of OHCHR. It then highlights some contextual factors - emerged as key ones - to inform and situate the findings.

Programme background, as per the TORs

The Office of the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Uganda was **established in 2005**; a Host Country Agreement was signed with the Government of Uganda in January 2006. The initial mandate focused on the **human rights situation in the conflict-affected areas** of Northern and North-Eastern Uganda (Karamoja). In 2009, the mandate of the OHCHR presence in Uganda (OHCHR-Uganda) was **extended to cover the entire country**. The Host Country Agreement was renewed again in 2011 and 2014. In May 2017, the Government of Uganda and OHCHR agreed to a non-renewable extension of the Host Country Agreement for a period of two years (March 2017-March 2019). OHCHR committed to submitting to the Government of Uganda an exit strategy within six months of the commencement of the agreement.

The **exit strategy** submitted to the Government provides an overview of key achievements of OHCHR-Uganda, and outlines envisaged priority areas of work and corresponding expected outcomes until March 2019. The strategy also suggests a framework to assess implementation and possible arrangements for collaboration beyond March 2019.

Since its establishment in Uganda, OHCHR has contributed to improving the human rights situation in the country through a comprehensive strategy that includes:

● **Monitoring of the human rights situation** with a view to advising the authorities on the formulation and implementation of policies, programmes and measures to promote and protect human rights;
● **Provision of advice and capacity-building support** to national authorities, the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), and civil society organizations (CSOs) with a view to strengthen respect for human rights;
● **Promotion of human rights to the general public** and dissemination of information on international human rights and humanitarian law standards.

A **review of the Uganda Country Programme** was conducted by a mixed team composed of an external consultant and staff members during the period of early November 2015 to March 2016. The objectives of this review were to assess OHCHR's work in Uganda and issue recommendations based upon relevance, comparative advantages, results-based management (RBM), and adequacy of organizational arrangements, efficiency, effectiveness and emerging opportunities.

An **agreement was signed with Sweden** to support the Uganda Country Office's work from 1 January 2017 until 31 March 2019. As per the agreement with Sweden, OHCHR is requested to carry out an independent evaluation of the Country Programme as early as possible in 2018 and submit the final report no later than 31 March 2019.

Table 2. Key Country office mandate framework

Country office	Uganda
Targeted regions	All regions formally targeted (field offices in Kampala, Moroto and Gulu)
Mandate time-frame	2015 – 2016 (addendum 2017-2019)

General mandate	Engage with the government, the National Human Rights Institution and other relevant stakeholders (national or international) to formulate and implement strategies, programmes and measures for the promotion and protection of human rights in Uganda (Point 2, Article III and Point 2, Article IV of the Agreement).
Specific objectives Points 3, 4, 5 and 6, Article IV of the Agreement.	● Provision of advice, capacity building and assistance to the competent authorities in relation strategies, programmes and measures. ● Observe the human rights situation in the country and inform competent authorities to enable them to take appropriate and timely action. ● Provision of advice, capacity building and assistance to all relevant stakeholders and individuals for the promotion and protection of human rights, including the use of national and international mechanisms and education programmes. ● Prepare its reports as and when determined by the High Commissioner of Human Rights prior duly sharing with the competent authorities of the Government of Uganda taking into consideration views and observations made by the relevant authorities.
Exit strategy	On 26th of September 2018 an exit strategy set the priorities of action of the country office from that time on until March 2019. The exit strategic actions incorporate 16 specific action points covering several topics and strategic actions (international mechanisms related, gender, legislation upgrading, national action plans, and general capacity building activities (in the form of training materials, training of trainers on different topics and general trainings).

Source: Country office documentation & Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the establishment of an OHCHR office in Uganda 2014 and its 2017 addendum.

Other important highlights about the context.

● **A country in transition.** According to the OECD development in transition concept Uganda is considered "in transition" to full economic, social and political development. According to most indicators there are improvements on many aspects of civil and political rights. Several reforms have taken place and boosted macroeconomic stability and the international and national confidence in the economy. Uganda decentralised the government; set constitutional reforms and enforced a sound separation of powers; restored peace and security across the country. According to the Freedom House 2018 Freedom in the World report some challenges, however, remain in the areas of political rights, civil liberties, and economic, social, and cultural rights, which require attention.

● **A country in a troubled region**. Most countries bordering Uganda are instable or in conflict. Uganda is currently home to 1.2 million refugees from South Sudan (66%), DRC (26,3%), Burundi (2,9%), Somalia (2,0%) - according to UNHCR 31st December 2018 data. In the face of a major crisis, Uganda has been a generous host, granting to refugees domestic rights and land to cultivate, to settle and integrate with local communities.

● **New challenges.** Uganda is confronted with an array of new challenges rooted in or aggravated by global dynamics. They include climate change (and linked issues on production / population movement); land grabbing (a consequence of previous displacements, but aggravated by business interest); new business (e.g. extractive and mining industries).

● **A very young, diverse country**. Many different ethnic groups' coexist in Uganda. They maintained their customary law and governance structure - side by side with formal legislation and systems. In terms of demographic, Uganda has the lowest median age of the region (15.8).

● **A policy-reality gap on women (and other) rights**. Uganda is a country strongly committed to advance human rights and considerable progress took place. But there is often a policy-reality gap in addressing rights. Women rights are a case in point. A lot of progress was made for example re: political representation, incorporation of gender / women rights dimensions in national plans and politics. However, and as highlighted by the UNDP 2015 Uganda country gender assessment, a patriarchal culture still dominates, with harmful religious, social and cultural widespread societal beliefs and practices. Access to sexual and reproductive health, to education, to land economic assets

are all specific rights of women overall poorly fulfilled. And institutions mandated with Human Rights promotion and protection (including UHRC, Equal Opportunity Commission) have still insufficient resources to tackle the gap.

- **A reality check: availability of resources for human rights**. Uganda is making many efforts to transition and to improve protection and enjoyment of human rights for all its citizens. International donors are also contributing to these efforts: individually through their Development cooperation schemes; jointly through the Democratic Governance Facility (currently seven development partners support state and non-state entities to strengthen democratisation, protect human rights, improve access to justice and enhance accountability in Uganda). However very real limitations remains, given limited budgets and resources available. Several human rights stakeholders (both from the JLOs area and CSOs) highlighted resource challenges (e.g. staffing, logistical, financial) and the effect they have on monitoring and fulfilling human rights

We also wish to highlight two points that specifically refer to OHCHR:

- **An evolving OHCHR presence.** The country office was set as a quite conventional type of engagement for OHCHR (field presence in a post-conflict situation) and evolved to operate in a transitioning country. The current role and functioning requires rethinking, refocusing the mandate and the strategy of intervention.
- **A challenging transition for OHCHR**. When the evaluation took place, the future of OHCHR in Uganda was uncertain. It had operated within a non-renewable mandate (and had therefore set an exit strategy as per request from Government/Ministry of Foreign Affairs). These uncertainties had a considerable impact on the activities of OHCHR, on its human resources (e.g. turnover, lack of staff in key positions, low morale and stress), on its capacity to attract resources (some donors disinvested in it); on its long term planning, on its stance and room for maneuver.

> Note: The field trip happened in November 2018 and the report captures the uncertain situation at the time. The OHCHR Country Office reported that the government had since indicated its readiness to accept a continued presence of OHCHR in Uganda.

Evaluation background

Background as per the Evaluation Terms of Reference (TORs)

The following table captures the evaluation overview and purpose as per the TORs. The evaluation questions highlighted the importance of looking at gender issues throughout the evaluation and the team responded to these concerns.

Evaluation overview and purpose as per TORs

> **Objectives**
>
> - To identify areas of strength and areas of weakness in the planning and achievement of results – including in the area of gender integration;
> - To produce useful lessons learned and good practices that illustrate successful and unsuccessful strategies in the achievement of results; and
> - To produce clear and actionable recommendations identifying concrete actions and responsibilities for OHCHR to undertake towards these ends.
>
> **Scope**
>
> The evaluation will assess the relevance and major results of OHCHR's work in Uganda since the review conducted in 2016, including the last two years of the programming cycle 2014–2017 and the first year of the period 2018-2021, i.e. the 2016-2018 period. It will also focus on the strategies that led or did not lead to the

achievements of the expected accomplishments, proposing possible changes to the Country Programme and organizational arrangements that will support the improvement of the Country Office.

Geographically, the evaluation will look at OHCHR's work in the entire country, with a main focus on the capital Kampala, Gulu and Moroto, where the Country Office's work has been focused during the last years. Other geographical areas could be identified during the inception stage.

Further background information

The evaluation took place from November 2018 to February 2019. The **evaluation team** was composed by Silva Ferretti and Joaquin de la Concha, two independent consultants who had never worked together before and engaged, for the first time, in an evaluation with OHCHR. We stress this as it clearly has implications in providing a "fresh" look at the programme, and also had ensured a high degree of independence and debate.

After an **inception phase** (documented in the inception report), the team visited the main office in Kampala and the two country offices in Gulu and Moroto from 29 November to 4 December 2018. In the initial days the team was accompanied by Sabas Monroy, evaluation officer of OHCHR. His support helped to shape the evaluation.

At the end of the evaluation, preliminary ideas were **presented face to face during a meeting in Kampala** to Robert Kotchani, Head of Office and Nicole Bjerler, his Deputy. They were also shared with the evaluation reference group.

This **report** will be made public and we hope it will reach all stakeholders consulted and further inform the ongoing dialogue.

As highlighted in the methodology section, the **time** available for the evaluation and the extent of the fieldwork was clearly insufficient to fully check a programme with such a broad scope, and its ramifications and impact. What the team could see and discuss also depended on availability of stakeholders, and whole areas (for example the Office's work related to military forces) could not be addressed.

We hope that the evaluation will provide nevertheless valuable content, at a time when OHCHR will have to **rethink its presence in Uganda**. The way forward is still open. Negotiations about OHCHR presence and about options for OHCHR engagement in Uganda are ongoing. Uncertainty about the future has been a challenge of the evaluation (as it was for the programme). The evaluation had to be both a "**mid-term**" and a "**final**" one. Final because an exit plan was in place at the time of the evaluation for a potential phase out of the offices in Uganda: it was important to assess progress on it. Mid-term because engagement in Uganda will continue - whatever the form - and it is key to understand what actions can be sustained, and how. We also felt that the evaluation can inform OHCHR beyond the work in Uganda: the key country setup and evolving context gave important insights for OHCHR as a whole.

To respond to all these challenges and needs, the evaluation had a two pronged approach, emphasising:

- *assessment of systems in place* (including an in-depth analysis of the Performance Monitoring System, PMS) to assess to what extent the existing monitoring system can assess achievements of the programme. This helped to both validate the information inferred from them, and to suggest options for their improvement - relevant to the Uganda office but also to OHCHR as a whole.
- *learning*. We quickly realized that many of the processes and approaches put in place by the programme have gone undocumented. Whilst the programme could document outputs of its activities it fell short from capturing the processes behind these. We emphasized this aspect because it will be 1) valuable to understand which processes will be relevant for the future presence in country and how they can be adapted - whatever the architecture of the programme will be and 2) an asset

for OHCHR as a whole, as several informants emphasized a growing desire for sharing learning across countries.

This report does not consolidate all that OHCHR did. There are several reasons for this. First of all, there is **much more than we could observe** - and we wanted to derive key learning from direct observation. Also, there are already many reports and documents that can provide an overview. A **comprehensive review** of the work of OHCHR, in particular, took place in 2016. This evaluation built on these and checked the status of their findings and recommendations - whenever possible. We sought not to duplicate what existed already, and rather identify new areas worth exploring or deepening.

Methodology

This section captures highlights of the methodology and the approaches in use.

Evaluation approach

The evaluation approach was:

- **Learning oriented:** as emphasized to all stakeholders, it recognizes that shortcomings are part of life and what matters is to understand them to improve on them. And also it recognizes that learning is very often implicit: that actors working on the ground might have developed practices, procedures, way of working that are extremely rich… and yet little captured and shared.
- **Systematic:** it brings together the tacit knowledge of different stakeholders in cohesive frames and narrations of the programme, or in models for action.
- **Theory and principles oriented.** A theory and principle-based approach seeks to go beyond "results" (the "what") and look at the processes, at the dynamics that lead to them ("how"). Processes and dynamics reside outside the logical result chain. They then require additional layers of analysis and to recognize that - within complex systems - the logic is not linear (whereby each action is assumed to have an effect), but that different forces are at play.
- **An appreciative, forward looking outlook.** In line with the learning approach, the emphasis of this report was not to "look at what happened to check adherence to plan", but rather to "look at what happened to do better in the future". This has a bearing in the way in which lessons were captured.
- **A consideration for gender and equality aspects**. Throughout the evaluation we sought to make explicit if and how the programme addressed gender and equality aspects: in its processes, in its targeting, in its impact. Questions and interactions to this end were included whenever appropriate - both in interviews and in surveys. The sample chosen for interviews sought to capture diversity of stakeholders. And we also prioritized analysis of programming aspects most likely to unveil these aspects (e.g. involvement with Women Human Rights Defenders).

Methods used

This section will detail the method used to gather information: interviews, focus groups, questionnaires.

Interviews: Semi-structured and brief-based.

Questions were not "checklist-based" (i.e. pre-established at the inception, on broad checklists) but "brief-based".

A brief is provided: our questions are "brief-based", not "checklist-based". We discuss in detail what each informant can reveal: why are we interviewing them? What can they share? How does this fit in the overall intervention strategy? What are the unique points of interest?

We explored "within the brief", to look at specific issues of interest and to probe and deepen it (learning more about what is anticipated)

We challenged the brief: we ask open questions to 1) challenge assumptions in the brief and look for alternative explanations (contextual factors, other contributions); 2) identify unexpected outcomes / ideas

Sampling for interviews and focus group: purposive.

Each interview had a clear purpose and brief. We selected / prioritized them focusing on learning: "which interactions can give the most significant insights, on core aspects of the programme?".

The evaluation reached 78 people through individual face-to-face interviews (32%), individual remote interviews (7%), face-to-face group interviews (32%), and focus groups (29%).

TYPE OF INTERVIEWEE	NUM People	%
DONOR	5	6%
UN	3	4%
OHCHR	21	27%
EXECUTIVE	5	6%
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4	5%
LEGISLATIVE	1	1%
JUDICIARY	1	1%
UHRC	5	6%
CSO	25	32%
MEDIA	6	8%
TRADITIONAL LEADER	2	3%

Out of the 78 people interviewed 53% were male and 47% female; with a big proportion of respondents from Kampala (46 people), followed by respondents from Gulu (14 people), Moroto (12 people) and Geneva (6 people).

A card game to make models explicit

During one-to-one interviews - mostly with OHCHR staff -, we used a card game to make more explicit existing models of work. It was specifically designed for this evaluation, and we evolved it throughout it.

- The **cards** represent the powers of the state (judiciary, legislative, executive) and the role of the UN. We gradually added other groups (traditional authorities, private sector, UHRC as a standalone card)
- The **linkages** helped to look at relations amongst actors. We learned the importance of distinguishing thin from thick ones - based on their emphasis and strength. And to colour them - based on their quality (e.g. strong, improving, problematic, etc).

Focus groups

We run two focus groups, with human rights defenders, organized aside their trainings sessions. So, we also had an opportunity to directly observe some activities they were involved in. The focus groups were introduced by a participatory activity: a **participatory game** (exploring new powers acquired) with the Women HRD and a **real time survey:** with the HRD group.

Questionnaire

Complementing all the above we run two questionnaires: one for OHCHR Country Office staff, and one for national human rights stakeholders. They included both qualitative and quantitative questions to assess trends for four of the main evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability). They explored knowledge / attitudes / practices and most significant changes through qualitative and quantitative questions.

Analysis

This evaluation took advantage of a large range of tools: supporting collaboration within the team, real time data gathering and participatory analysis, remote interviews, network and relationship analysis, interactive data visualization, multimedia sharing.

Triangulation:

Triangulation is key to crosscheck evidence and increase quality. We triangulated **across interviews** and **within interviews:** our method of enquiry (based on in depth conversation) led to substantiate any information with practical example, facts. We strived to go from "opinion" to "evidence".

How we looked at efficiency.

Efficiency was assessed through pre-set indicators. The methodology used to assess efficiency is backed up by theoretical definitions and academic work as detailed in the table below.

Standard	Indicators	References
Operational management auditing	● Thorough formal administrative and financial procedures adapted to context ● Financial monitoring system traceability ● Financial cross checking procedures ● Best-deal policies and access to local prices ● Direct costs, project staff link to outputs.	Management auditing. Several sources including Serrano 41, Ernst & Young auditing standards and theoretical background summarised in (Armas, Raul. 2008) and the management auditing guide of the European Court of Auditors (ECA, 2017)
Cost-Effectiveness	● Balance of budget vs outputs and outcomes ● Adequate human resources structure vs tasks ● Existing synergies and alternatives of implementation ● Resources vs stakeholders perceived values	Cost effectiveness principles (Centre for European evaluation expertise, 2006) & Participatory Value for Money (D'Emidio, Francesca, 2017)
Result-based management & budgeting	● Budget breakdown vs results breakdown ● Result based decision making	Result based budgeting and management principles (Council of Europe, 2005) & (United Nations, 1998) & (UNDG, 2010) & (Christian Aid, 2012)

Assessment included a desk review including UNDP and OHCHR procurement regulations though it is not backed up by an audit of the Country office (last specific CO audit on carried out on 2016).

Limitations

● **Access to informants:** We directly engaged with nearly 80 people, but we feel that this extensive list is still far away from being sufficiently representative of the broad scope of the programme.
● **Limited evidence available:** It was hard to gather data and information to assess the extent of the achievements. We are thankful for the openness of the OHCHR team, who transparently shared a lot of information and opened their system to us. But, as illustrated in the efficiency section, even when we tried to directly access monitoring and information systems, we could not extract needed data for analysis: either because they were not in appropriate formats or because some elements were missing altogether.
● **Short time, particularly in the field location and no access to communities.** We only had one day for each field office, so we could only meet with informants in town and no local communities.
● **Uneven coverage of ongoing OHCHR activities**. OHCHR has a very large array of activities, and - because of the limitation highlighted above - we could not cover them equally.

- **Largely based on the purposive sampling within OHCHR contacts.** This evaluation has very little scope in understanding "what is beyond the OHCHR radar". Our contact with people not directly linked to OHCHR was very limited, given the short time available and - as the next point shows- the uncertainties about the OHCHR presence in Uganda.
- **The uncertainty on OHCHR's future presence.** The evaluation happened as discussions regarding possible continued presence were taking place. The sensitive timing had a bearing on the way in which views were framed and in the potential for thinking ahead.

Main findings

This section presents the main findings of the report.

The first section is structured around the evaluation criteria established by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC). It looks at the standard ones of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact orientation, sustainability and also at gender and evaluability. Within them it explores, in particular the aspects that had been highlighted in the evaluation questions. Whilst exploring all questions, we did not however always strictly present findings "question by question". The extremely high number of questions (over 30) and the presence of recurring topics would have led to a disconnected narration and to repetitions. Some cross-cutting themes, whilst mentioned within each criterion, where then better consolidated within a specific standard, or when dealing with models and learning. This is the case, for example, of many effectiveness concerns. Elsewhere, as in the efficiency section, we had used consolidated frameworks that, whilst responding all the questions asked, aggregated them with a slightly different logic.

A final section on Conclusions and Recommendations consolidates findings across cross cutting themes and reveals new issues and perspectives.

Relevance

In assessing relevance, we:

- provide an **overview of the overall relevance** of actions for the situation in country;
- outline considerations on the **relevance and adequacy of the intervention for the different stakeholders** we engaged with, in context.
- look at how the office **assesses needs and prioritizes actions** (and at the integration of risk and gender within them) focusing in particular on the capacities to assess **discrimination**.

Relevance for the human rights situation in the country

The feedback received by all actors has been positive: the work of OHCHR was very relevant and addressed key areas to ensure the respect of rights. The evaluation is, of course, not a comprehensive assessment of the programme impact on the overall human rights situation in the country. But, within the remit explored, the actors interviewed in different institutions, felt that the programme has been relevant to help them addressing human rights. High level government informants confirmed that OHCHR support was important for the government, for example for setting human right committees in several institutions and bodies, helping the government in meeting its human rights obligations - and also in putting positive pressure on the government. Support to national instruments (such as the National Development Plan, NDP, in collaboration with the Uganda Human Rights Commission, UHRC), ensured that they incorporate human rights. We checked, for example, how Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA), gender-based concerns, respect of international norms on gender equality and women rights, have been strongly integrated in national plans and policies. Regarding SDGs, the Country Office programme had sensitized government institutions and civil society actors and created tools to incorporate human rights and concerns for SDGs in legislation and policies, putting Uganda at the forefront in the region. But these engagements are of course only the first steps of a very long chain of change, which needs to be followed and tracked and possibly further accompanied by the Office to ensure that the instruments and the work done remains relevant and used, and not only "on paper". Work with civil society is a very positive step in this direction. But we noticed that, overall, capacity to follow up - and support efforts to ensure changes in the legal frameworks trickles down to citizens in practice - has been lacking. There are also challenges regarding continued assessments of the country's needs –including identification of likely future potential areas of tensions and anticipated trends.

Alignment with other actors

Considerations regarding work with other actors will be expanded under the header of effectiveness. Overall alignment of OHCHR's programme with the plans of national counterparts has been strong. Some actors – from all areas of the State - were really keen to emphasize that resistance or contrast to OHCHR might come from *individuals*, not at all from the *institutions*. Institutions are willing to be aligned with international instruments and human rights, and Uganda is strongly committed to comply. This commitment helped, for example, to grow stronger relations amongst the police and OHCHR on the ground: some interlocutors emphasized that it is in the best interest of national institutions if human rights issues are spotted and corrected. Limiting individual deviance, in terms of not complying with human rights standards, will help to increase trust. The following table present some highlights on relevance, focusing on the actors we mostly engaged with.

Executive bodies	The work of OHCHR has been seen extremely relevant to incorporate HR in local instruments and to strengthen them. A strong collaboration led to incorporation of HR, SDGs, HRBA in national plans and policies and ensured stronger accountability on international instruments. Institutions were receptive to engagement and capacity building, seeing this as relevant with their mandate.
Parliamentary	Relevant engagements with the Parliamentary Committees (specially the Human Rights

bodies	Committee); revision of legislative pieces; and provision of tools to upgrade HRBA in the Parliament (update of a checklist to review legislation by the Committees). There are however, relevant avenues of collaboration to be further explored by the Office (e.g. lobbying on gender awareness, international mechanisms follow up, , etc.)
Judiciary	OHCHR engagement has been minor in relation to the challenges of the sector. It mostly focused on ESCR justiciability and witness protection. In field locations, magistrates contacted would have been keen to interact with OHCHR but had no opportunity of practical interaction with the office.
UHRC	It is a strong partnership, through joint work and capacity building. Coordination and issues around work share sometimes became a bit conflictual, but overall the partnership has been very much valued.
Police forces	In field locations police officers emphasized the value of joint work to improve practices and monitor deviance from human rights standards. Common engagement took place in the context of monitoring, and within capacity building initiatives (with police, with communities)
Civil society (HRD)	HRD activist, supported mostly with capacity building initiatives, found OHCHR's engagement relevant to their needs. However civil society organizations outside the HRD networks would have wished for more engagement including through discussing options for strategic engagement.
Cultural leaders	Leaders directly supported in their struggle (e.g. on land issues) found OHCHR's engagement relevant. It is less clear, however, how OHCHR can make human rights work relevant within traditional governance: the impression is that interest for human rights is currently the exception, not the rule.
Media	The work of OHCHR was relevant for the journalists who received training, but overall there was a minimal investment in working with the media, strategically.
Donors	There is a strong alignment with international donors who engage strongly on governance . The engagement also include participations in joint formal and informal meetings, where the presence and the expertise of OHCHR is very valued.

Sources of information and processes for contextual analysis.

Relevance rests on strong contextual analysis. OHCHR built it using different sources of information for analysis, which can be summed up as:

- **Information on/from Human Rights Mechanisms**: information on/from human rights treaty bodies and other mechanisms (e.g.: reporting included in the different mechanisms and general rights as enshrined in the treaty bodies). Comments from government stakeholders indicated potential weakness of such assistance (e.g. information on status of reporting and compliance on some instruments - such as the convention on torture – is not always properly flagged).
- **Global trends and practices on human rights, on specialized topics**: staff has a strong theoretical thematic knowledge and it is informed of global measures, methodologies, emerging practices applied on specific HR issues (e.g.: main challenges for the physical and psychical integrity in detention places and measures to combat torture practices, technical guidance on reducing preventable maternal health).
- **(Direct) monitoring of human rights violations**. Direct monitoring of human rights violation has been a core function of OHCHR in the past, and it has continued indirectly in field locations, in close collaboration with UHRC. But there is now momentum for monitoring conducted directly by national actors. And, de facto, this is what is happening, as capacities in country (e.g. of UHRC) are increasing.
- **Aggregation of information from other sources**: As mentioned in the previous point monitoring increasingly transformed to be more indirect. It now relies on information from official national sources (e.g. UHRC reports), from civil society actors, from general media - rather than direct engagement.
- **Key-informants and channels linked to practice**: information is also obtained along the various engagements of the country offices, with diverse stakeholders (that OHCHR supports through

capacity building). Engagement with other knowledgeable actors in common activities, all over the country (e.g. in the context of training, meetings) might of course also help to gather useful insights on human rights. But capacity to systematically harvest and consolidate this information seems patchy within the organization Assessments are also informally based on roundtable meetings with stakeholders, donors, key informants that OHCHR engages with.

- **Research**: OHCHR had supported some research initiatives (e.g. albinism study with the Equal Opportunities Commission of Uganda, HRD women defenders, on witness protection) in collaboration with different stakeholders. Research findings had been taken on –as needs identification assessments to take action on those topics.

The processes for consolidating and systematizing the information - for analysis and for planning - are diverse within teams. Analysis tends to be done at the country office's thematic teams level, based on their own layers of information within their areas of intervention. The main tendency - as indicated by staff - is to use information coming out from national and international sources aggregating the information rather than intelligence gathered through direct exposure and/or contextual knowledge of the topics and the locations where information is gathered (which was the main focus in the early years and is also a missed opportunity for an organization which has a country presence). Each team designed their own interventions, and they were shared in participatory meetings (i.e. staff retreat) to devise the overall office strategy. Such setup was valuable in putting ideas into the common space and breaking silos - in an office that has overall poor internal communication. But it has not been conducive to a strong overall analysis (there is no formal overall assessment of the national context -or, at least, we have not had access to it); it led to insufficient synergy amongst activities, which remained scattered. Staff had also indicated that prioritization was predominantly guided by a "wow!" factor (meaning that actions leading to high numbers and very visible results taking priority over more standard but consistent ones).

There is often a lack of future orientation in the analysis. The office might be aware of risks and trends, but this is not linked to tools and frameworks for risk assessment and for risk management work. We also remarked that considerations about groups at risk of discrimination are unevenly captured across thematic context assessments.

It is of course very challenging to gain a view of the status of human rights in a country (e.g.: trends; groups / rights requiring more focus; practices in use) Gathering a full picture will always remain and elusive mission, but there is space for OHCHR to improve its approaches by improving capacity to consolidate information and evidence.

OHCHR has managed to be opportunistic, in seizing interesting subsets and opportunities for action (e.g. the work with persons living with albinism). The evaluation also revealed the importance of **incremental processes of analysis and action**: for example, regarding the work on human rights in development. As action move on, more issues are emerging (for example: sugar companies land rights clashes, extractive companies regulations, natural parks developments, etc) concerning both the people and the government. It seems that where action was successful it contributed to unveil novel issues to deepen.

Needs assessment and non-discrimination. Towards a multi factored analysis.

Given the importance of non-discrimination for OHCHR, the evaluation revealed the need for further investment in it. This would include setting up tools for analysis that now seems to be lacking. The previous Country Programme Review (2016) had pointed to the need to develop a power analysis in this context, but this had not yet been fulfilled. OHCHR has definitely a role to play in terms of spotting the forgotten rights, the forgotten groups but, until now, this had not been systematically addressed. OHCHR could have a role in:

- **going beyond "the checklist".** OHCHR managed to identify vulnerable people beyond these addressed by default - e.g. women, children, people with disabilities - who are also more likely to be already supported by other institutions. OHCHR participated in work (e.g. 2018 workshop on SDGs and data) where a list of marginalised/vulnerable groups was developed together with national

partners and now has an important role in taking this forward, to avoid that they will be eventually left out. At the time of the evaluation there was not a clear specific prioritization / budget allocation / specific plan in this regard. OHCHR started supporting not-traditional, vulnerable groups to different degrees (e.g. persons living with albinism, minorities LGBTQ+,) but it has been so far ad-hoc, not within a broader assessment of non-discrimination.

- analysis of **niches of rights and needs not supported.** OHCHR showed potential in appreciating the need for a multi-factor analysis of exclusion, and avoided the risk of stereotyping vulnerability. For example, OHCHR effectively spotted dimensions not sufficiently addressed when working with women: the specific challenges and potentials of women rights activists and defenders. Other categories that have been spotted have been, for example, refugees living outside settlements, but there was no agreement for concerted action with other UN bodies.

Make the programmes more relevant to the youth.

In Uganda youth are the large majority, yet they seem insufficiently targeted as active actors.

Youth – and their fresh views - were often seen as of a hindrance rather than a resource. And yet, this is the youngest country in the region. Many of the informants met were more inclined to talk about "obligations" -when dealing with youth - rather than rights. OHCHR itself had pointed out the importance of engaging with the youth as key stakeholders and agents but had little to show re concrete work with them, even if youth are a priority globally.

What challenges are the youth experiencing? What could be their role? The evaluation could clearly see that targeting youth is a major gap in the action of OHCHR. The evaluation also received some anecdotal views about why engagement with youth should matter (low social status, limited access to resources, no decision making within their communities, unemployment… and for young girls also gender based violence, scarce access to reproductive health, etc). This anecdotal information is of course not sufficient to anticipate possible lines of work and the evaluation team would encourage the Office to engage in a thorough analysis of the human rights concerns faced by youth. We only encountered few young people (and this reflect a bias in the interviewees lists received from the office for the evaluation). Some were attending the HRDs trainings and participated in our focus group. They strongly asked to involve the youth more, cross-cutting across engagements. There is currently a UNCT youth strategy in place (UNICEF and UNFPA are in the lead): engagement of OHCHR can help to ensure a strong, cohesive rights based angle within this work.

When asking stakeholders about the role of youth – even ones with a strong overview of civil society - we realized that youth was somehow not on their radar. They are not much catered for in the programmes we were exposed to. Even knowledgeable activists could tell us little more than "youth are not much present in existing organizations, but that «they organize in *other ways*, mainly on social media". We also encountered many preconceptions about the youth, and emphasis on deviance rather than capacities or an acknowledgement about the challenges that they encountered (for example, in accessing income generating activities) in a society where age matters.

The OHCHR global operational plan (OMP 2018-2021) highlights youth as an emerging strategic priority and indeed it seems that they would require more attention, linking them also to the efforts to create a vibrant civil society space. But they have been so far little targeted in Uganda. The following gaps where revealed:

- **stakeholder mapping**. The programme had not sufficiently explored youth movements and forums, this would be a needed improvement.
- **investment in innovative approaches**. There has been so far very little investment in approaches likely to be more suitable for the youth - such as use of social media, linking communication and action on rights.

Engagement in the refugee response.

OHCHR has been side-lined within the refugee response: the relation with UNHCR is currently limited both in Kampala and on the ground, despite obvious complementarities. Local staff in Gulu shared the frustration for not having the space to investigate human rights incidents related to refugees happening in the area. Being formally in charge of a geographic area - and de-facto left out - is problematic. Also,

there has not been any evidence of sharing learning and practices. Yet OHCHR has very relevant expertise (on IDP population movements) and even maintained, since the previous emergency, a field presence in the very areas where influx is now taking place - which would have been an asset worth tapping in by the UNCT. Whilst recognizing the leading role that UNHCR has at a time of a refugee influx, it remains unclear why what OHCHR had to offer was not capitalized upon. Field staff shared that also some local authorities were unclear and puzzled by this setup. Gaps revealed by the evaluation included:

- **lack of a proactive role in the protection cluster**. in other countries - it was reported - OHCHR has effectively supported special interest groups (e.g. LGBT, victims of torture). This had not happened in the current crisis.
- **an established referral chain for at risk refugees.** refugees enjoy freedom of movement in Uganda, and OHCHR had encountered some refugee cases requiring attention - both in field offices and Kampala. Referrals were made to other UN agencies, but through an informal mechanism, and not followed up - so referees were unclear if any action was actually taken. OHCHR could actually be uniquely positioned to help ensuring that an adequate referral system exist across UN organizations in the country.

Work in field offices.

OHCHR has 2 field offices which is what remains of the engagement during the crisis in Northern Uganda. Other field engagements (e.g. training workshops) are then run from Kampala. The two offices seem to be quite different.

Gulu
it is de facto already phasing out. Civil society and local actors seems to be strong and confident, and not reliant on its support. There are few new activities. Its area of work includes region with refugee influx, but the office is not working on this issue.
Collaboration with UHRC is good, but mostly limited to logistics and financial support.

Moroto:
it is still very active and engaged. Its long-term staff built trust during the crisis response phase, but also managed evolve, and is on top of current issues. Many activities are ongoing, and OHCHR has an active role in supporting projects and engagements across civil society actors. There is strong collaboration with UHRC - with regular planning meetings- and with other state actors (e.g. coordination)

Why there, and not somewhere else? The placement of the field offices is a relic of the past. This does not mean that their work is not relevant, but rather that there is no explicit rationale for their placement other than the past history of OHCHR. In the Gulu case, relevance seems to be minimal. There are few activities and minimal engagement with local actors: it was only the occupation of the Gulu office by a group of members of the Apaa community in response to land rights disputes and related human right abuses, really, that brought them together.

Moroto office, on the contrary, is perceived as a strong, relevant stakeholder in the area. It is working in partnership with local civil society actors in restorative justice for victims of torture. It facilitates coordination meetings. It maintained a continuous presence on the ground, and ongoing capacity support to local actors, including on "new" issues, such as land.

Within the current overall work of OHCHR the setup and relevance of field offices should be reviewed. They had strong advantages, as shown in the table below. But some of the "field" activities, now run directly by OHCHR Kampala bypass the local offices (for example: training, projects run by partners,

such as Fida in Gulu). Local context is changing, making a presence less relevant where capacity of civil society and local government institutions become higher. Finally, a scattered presence does not help in building consistent coverage: for example regarding monitoring activities.

If the OHCHR continues to invest in field presence, it will need to set criteria and mechanisms (e.g. analysis and assessment) to gauge the opportunity of future field deployments - which are now lacking.

Benefits of an effective field presence in the upcountry.

- **It feeds capacity building.** OHCHR staff strongly believe that presence and strong monitoring made a difference in the quality of their technical assistance. Their trainings and support were relevant and well received because they did not just bring an expert from outside to give the theory: they built it on strong knowledge of practices; they were aware of what loopholes, challenges would be found on the ground.
- **It demonstrates options for positive interaction**. Even when relationship amongst actors had been flagged - at national level - as potentially problematic, field engagement showed a different picture. Diverse actors accompanied by OHCHR, working together on practical endeavours shifted attitudes and understood potential of joint engagements.
- **They can offer opportunities to pilot, pre-institutionalize practices**. Within decentralised setups (or when engaging with customary actors) working locally can become an opportunity to test new models of actions or to support the setting of by-laws, local regulations that can then be up-scaled or replicated. This way of working might well complement national level work on instrument settings - which might be good on paper, but might still need practical support to fine tune implementation.
- **Relief is over, the triple nexus between humanitarian, peace and development is next.** Moroto is a good case in point: the humanitarian crisis is now over, but new complex dynamics are appearing. A field presence could explore, with local actors and a future orientation, new ways of working and collaboration to take the nexus forward, in particular looking at new areas for engagement (e.g. business and rights), still little covered by traditional actors. This does not imply maintaining a traditional field office there - as some of its functions are being handed over to UHRC - but rather to rethink what the shape and added value of a field presence might be. Other UN actors emphasized that presence should not equate only with having an office, for example, and proposed options for liaisons (for example, hosting OHCHR staff in their respective offices).

Effectiveness

This section will focus on result-based effectiveness, starting from the stated overall achievements of outcomes as per the Performance Monitoring System, PMS. It will not duplicate the monitoring and analysis work already done by the office. It will rather gauge capacity of the system to properly capture and account for the outcomes (through an extensive analysis, also validated by spot checks of activities) and then focus on specific cross-cutting areas - highlighted in the evaluation questions - as a proxy:

- **collaboration and partnership with local actors;**
- engagement modalities with stakeholders - emphasizing **capacity building engagements;**
- **communication** with and across stakeholders: a welcome question, was extremely useful to highlight a key area of engagement for OHCHR, which requires strengthening.

This section has been informed by background analysis. For the assessment of the SIDA results framework the evaluation has relied mainly on the 2017 End of Year Report (the only workplan compatible with the proposed framework) and the related information contained in the PMS system.

Achievements as per the PMS.

We used - as a reference to **gauge effectiveness of planned results** - the achievements as captured in the PMS. We explored the modalities through which achievements are assessed to gauge their credibility.

Thematic priority 2014-17	Outcomes (note: targets within outcomes may refer to achieving small advances in order to consider full achievement)	Achievements as per PMS
WIDENING DEMOCRATIC SPACE	1. Civil society, in particular the youth, and women, increasingly advocate and claim their rights; and protect themselves more effectively from reprisals	Partial achievement
	1. Government actors (UPDF, UPF, Ministry and Local Government) increasingly respect public freedoms and the exercise of other related human rights	Full achievement
	1. The UHRC increasingly implements its constitutional mandate in accordance with the Paris Principles, monitors and handles cases of HRVs and HR promotion interventions.	Good progress
HUMAN RIGHTS IN DEVELOPMENT AND THE ECONOMIC SPHERE	1. Increased compliance of national legislations, policies and programmes with international HR standards	Full achievement
	1. UNCT and UN agencies programmes and funds increasingly responsive to HR aspects of their interventions	Full achievement
COUNTERING DISCRIMINATION	1. Legislation, policies and institutional practices substantively comply with non-discrimination and equality, particularly on gender, LGBT persons, PWD, People living with HIV/AIDS, and an enabling environment is provided for rights' holders to advocate and claim their rights.	Full achievement

COMBATING IMPUNITY AND STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE RULE OF LAW	1. Transitional justice mechanisms increasingly established and operating in accordance with international human rights standards and good practices	Partial achievement
	1. UPDF, UPF & UPS increasingly comply with international standards on the use of force, arrest, detention, and treatment of persons in custody, including in events of counterterrorism, treason charges and rebellion	Full achievement
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS	1. National institutional mechanisms are in place and functional, including the NHRAP and NHREP in order to increase engagement with the UPR process, treaty body reporting and special procedures.	Partial achievement
	1. Civil society networks, NHRI and UN entities are increasingly engaging with the UPR process, treaty body reporting and Special Procedures	Partial achievement

Challenges in gauging achievements of results

For 2017 the PMS accounts to 78% of accomplishment of outcomes. But this figure is highly subjective, and based on office self-assessments by Country Office staff. According to the self assessment, for example, countering discrimination and human rights in development are rated as "fully achieved" and human rights mechanism is the pillar facing more challenges. However, "achieved" just means that programmes were completed satisfactorily, but it would be a far stretch, to say that now the situation of discriminated groups is fine. Besides that, the assessment is not informed by clear indicators and baselines and it assessment of results is highly subjective.

Vice versa, areas marked as "partially achieved" are displaying very relevant progresses, For example, the National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) might still not be in place (leading to a low score), but Uganda had been nevertheless one of the most active States in the last 2016 UPR mechanism review, with positive effects on different state bodies.

Assessing the extent through which **benefits were accrued amongst men and women** was also not possible in this setup, because of intrinsic challenges of the use of PMS regarding gender analysis.

The evaluation has collected and consolidated the self-reported information from the PMS system on the outputs and activities. Main lessons captured form this assessment also include challenges in measuring outputs and strong incoherence between outcomes, outputs and activity achievement and implementation reported. This assessment does not however shed any further light on the overall effectiveness of the office. In the PMS system, outputs are merely referred to in the narrative section and the system does not allow tracking of output indicators. But even if indicators were presented, we should still question the appropriateness of this assessment to identify key drivers and limitations for the difference in the reported effects - because of the ambitiousness of the goals set up, the political nature of the work and the overall systemic subjectivity of the existing monitoring system -.

Partnership, coordination: engagement with and amongst stakeholders

This section explores partnerships and relations with key actors.

OHCHR and UHRC

The relation amongst OHCHR and the Uganda Human Rights Commission, UHRC, is of course a key one, giving their complementary role and the importance of UHRC for monitoring and promoting human rights in Uganda. This relationship evolved along the years with high and low points.

UHRC staff had emphasized the strengths of the partnership, and its importance for the organization: it had undoubtedly increased capacity. Long term, continuous engagement of OHCHR - compared to other international organizations - made a difference in building reciprocal trust. International actors also praised this: continuity and efforts by OHCHR in this partnership building were outstanding - when compared to other national / international collaboration.

On the ground, collaboration seemed the strongest: being one team, being a family. Relationship was clearly strengthened by the continuous collaboration on a vast range of activities such as coordination meetings; monitoring missions - including in detention facilities and on land issues -; capacity building initiatives. The Moroto office also stressed the importance of a joint practice of planning and monitoring in strengthening collaboration

Overall, the collaboration was much stronger than we had expected: background literature, inception talks had rather anticipated the risk of competition or duplication. This was never mentioned, despite being probed for.

Limitations of the partnership had tended to be linked to procurement and UN bureaucracy (e.g. reimbursements of costs incurred to attend activities organized by OHCHR.) **Benefits** of the collaboration, as emphasized by UHRC staff were many. Some are closely linked to the *assets* (knowledge, resources) held by OHCHR:

- **Capacity.** Engagement with OHCHR - through formal training or joint work was highly valued. It helped to improve standards of victim protection, data collection… etc.
- **Resources**: UHRC has little resources for the huge work of investigating human rights. The financial and logistical support of OHCHR made a difference and allowed swift response in emergency (and UHRC emphasized that swift response also strengthens trust-building with communities). Resource provision alone, however, shall not be a justification for future engagement: more needed resources could be provided to UHRC even without an OHCHR presence.

Other aspects highlighted by UHRC were more connected with the *nature* of the OHCHR presence:

- **Stronger authority**. OHCHR had more weight than UHRC in denouncing challenges, being an international institution. In some situations, a joint mission generated more respect and was differently received than a UHRC mission.
- **Overcoming diffidence by communitie**s. Communities might not appreciate that a government body can be independent. Working together with OHCHR had helped to build more trust.

Some local actors also emphasized that OHCHR - in field office engagement - contributed capacity to pinpoint and push for engagement on new issues (e.g. relating to work on access to justice for victims of torture; monitoring of extractive industries). OHCHR's capacity to identify new ground and tackle new issues led to very interesting joint work, And it is an at-risk aspect if OHCHR disengage from the field.

The above points on authority and trust have often been remarked also in Kampala, by various actors (both international and national - including government): UHRC, being a government agency might struggle to make the government accountable on certain political topics. We feel, however, that this concern is applicable to *any* human right governmental body, not just within Uganda. And that does not make justice to the accomplishment of UHRC (they maintained a National HR Institutions accreditation "A" status under Paris principles). If the challenge is a global one, a suitable question for support could be: "what learning, practices, experiences OHCHR could share - from its global experience - re: **support of the independence of governmental agencies**?" A proactive approach (exposure to practices) might be more productive. A need for **investment in shared learning** was also highlighted - on more specific topics - by the OHCHR staff closely working with UHRC. Some felt that they had to reinvent the wheel, for example, in devising the best involvement of UHRC in the UPR, and emphasized that knowing practices in other countries would have really helped.

The UHRC will remain an important partner for OHCHR. The evaluation found growing trust in UHRC in the locations visited. For example, media representatives met felt that UHRC is a reliable source and such trust might, in a virtuous circle, help to build trust within communities.

Joint planning with UHRC

An important component of a close partnership are systems and options for collaborative planning, monitoring, learning. We are unclear if and to what extent this was achieved in the collaboration with UHRC. Many mentions were made of a national joint planning, both within OHCHR and UHRC, but we never got to see the actual plans, despite requesting it from both sides. It appears that the plan is rather a set of memos. A proper plan, transparently shared, would have been very much needed to strengthen mutual (as well as external) accountability and in assessing progress. It is also unclear if the national joint plans were known at the field level. In one case the local representatives had not received any plan and they did not know of operational documents in Kampala. Improving linkages amongst diverse levels of planning would also be key for internal accountability. Ensuring that joint plans and options for collaboration are better communicated to the ground should have been a priority. In Moroto, UHRC and OHCRC had set periodic plans for action. The process seemed to be quite well oiled and strong, and included also a reflection process on achievements. It would have been great to see this planning practice replicated and integrated in the planning chain: to support bottom up planning processes within both OHCHR and UHRC.

JLOs

The Justice and Law Order Sector (JLOs), created to address access to justice related problems, comprises all institutions with mandates of administering justice and maintaining law and order and human rights in the country. Most of the main OHCHR CO partners belong to this sector (including UHRC, other executive bodies and law enforcement actors, legislative bodies and judiciary institutions). Overall relationships with these institutions are perceived as highly positive, fruitful and needed.
Coordination with the whole sector as such varies depending on the regions (with good overall coordination at district and regional coordination committees in the Karamoja region but weak in the Gulu area). Regarding the overall national coordination, and despite its importance, the evaluation work spotted no big reference to joint action plans between the office strategies and the JLOS overall plan 2017-2020.

The JLO concepts comprises institutions with very different mandates, despite some complementary in their roles. Whilst the JLO concept is useful for coordination efforts, conflating them has been challenging for OHCHR in terms of designing its interventions, entry points and strategies.

Civil society

Civil society stakeholders are core partners of the OHCHR in the country. OHCHR worked with a large array of organisations but focused specifically on Human Rights Defenders (**HRDs**). The strategy for targeting civil society has changed over the years: from a "reactive" approach to demands to a more proactive and strategic targeting of umbrella organisations - which, however, still falls short from meeting the existing demand of engagement among CSOs. The direct engagement of OHCHR with civil society will be presented at length across the evaluation. The key is that such engagement led to tangible outcomes regarding effectiveness and capacity of civil society actors.
A challenge, when working with civil society, is **representativeness**. OHCHR staff pointed out that, in recent years, the UN system in Uganda shifted to work more "upstream" (with the government) than "downstream" (with the grassroots - the assumption being that local partners are better placed to do so). It is increasingly harder to get connection with the "community" - in particular in contexts where civil society does not always equate with communities and might be even mistrusted. One customary leader, when talking about to the platforms he belongs to, specified *"we are not civil society, we do not get money"*. Other actors suggested that civil society organizations might be even seen as "foreign agent", an issue that has bearing when dealing with already discriminated groups (as it is the case with LGBTQ+ work).

Customary actors

OHCHR had some interactions with customary actors within the programme. Some cultural leaders, for example, had been invited to trainings, or to participate in civil society platforms. National actors are already working with customary leaders: parliamentary commission representatives emphasized how they had organized meetings with cultural leaders when passing laws impacting on traditional practices. UHRC also connects with cultural institutions, including through training. For OHCHR, this engagement has still been limited, and not as strategic as this area of work would demand.

In Uganda, in fact, customary and state law still coexist, and have equal importance - as far as they respect the Constitution. Ensuring that also customary laws are in line with human rights might have a big impact for the many people for whom customary law is still the main reference and port of call. It is a systemic issue, however, which cannot just be solved only through some training (which might be seen as "imposing approaches") but would rather require a more holistic approach, as it is the case for state institutions and legal processes.

Support to collaboration and coordination mechanisms

In addition to partnership development, OHCHR had also supported coordination mechanisms, and creation of new platforms at the local level. This is a very important area of engagement, given its convening role. Good examples include the setup of :

● **Karamoja Regional Protection Meetings**. This is a very relevant model for action, valued by participants. It brings together JLOs actors, with civil society, in practical coordination work on protection issues.
● **Moroto District mineral watch platform:** OHCHR can help to highlight new issues and to convene actors around them. This had happened regarding the work on land and business: in Moroto an embryonic platform was formed and supported with training. It is composed by civil society actors (including traditional leaders) and seeks to protect small scale miners from large companies. Engagement amongst NGOs has also been supported, which eventually should lead to some guidelines to work with extractive companies. This is part of a broader engagement, also connecting actors at the national level to set a new National Action Plan on new business and human rights.
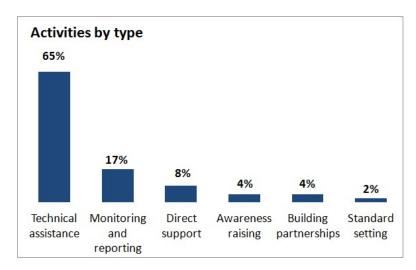
A donor also emphasized the strengths of OHCHR in supporting **networks**, including with regard to support to coordination, facilitation of dialogue which ensures that collaboration wins over competitiveness amongst members. The support to **HRDs networks** was praised. However, participants revealed weaknesses in supporting networking within HRDs initiatives: capacity building seemed to have catered more for developing *individual* capacities rather than *collaborative* ones.

OHCHR had not always taken advantage of existing coordination mechanisms - which suggest the need for highlighting better coordination opportunities. For example:

● **district coordination meetings**. The absence of OHCHR in Gulu district coordination meetings was remarked. It would have been a good forum - according to representatives of the judiciary - to share reports and needs for intervention.
● **donor meetings.** OHCHR had developed increasingly better one-to-one relations with donors - which are very much valued by all the representatives we met. A desire for a stronger lead by OHCHR in coordination - in convening, in highlighting issues - emerged.
● **coordination with civil society actors.** Civil society actors in Gulu lamented that, despite a long term presence in the area, there has not been really substantial coordination. The UN would call people for events such as the 10 December (Human Rights Day), but not for participation in more substantial coordination mechanisms. There are several networks operating in the area, including on land issues, but OHCHR seems to have had little interaction with them: other international organizations had supported these. Not all the local organization working on rights monitoring are aware of the tools and systems (e.g. the database for the monitoring of human rights cases) that OHCHR implemented.

Avenues for action: the importance of technical assistance, capacity building

The diagram below, based on the Country Office's Annual Work Plan 2017, captures approaches in use by OHCHR (counting activities, by type). Technical assistance predominates (about two thirds). Monitoring accounts for one fifth. Only a small percentage of activities are devoted to awareness raising or building partnerships (partnership building is however often an implicit component of other activities).

Activities by type

- Technical assistance: 65%
- Monitoring and reporting: 17%
- Direct support: 8%
- Awareness raising: 4%
- Building partnerships: 4%
- Standard setting: 2%

Technical assistance is the largest area of engagement for the office. It comprises capacity building (mostly training and workshops); support to the production of documents and/or guidelines (e.g.: witness guidelines, Human rights manuals in Mukono University, business and human rights handbook, etc.); and technical support to respond and work on recommendations received from different international mechanisms (CRPD, UPR, etc.).

Capacity building (mostly relying on trainings and workshops) has been one of the main areas of engagement of OHCHR. Capacity building events have been many and varied, reaching out to diverse stakeholders (government representatives, members of the judiciary, traditional leaders…). We had consistently received good feedback on capacity building from informants: on the relevance and on the quality of the support provided. Capacity building components have been **incorporated in technical support** (e.g. working on UPR, address recommendations from different international mechanisms… etc), and mostly with clear links to action. Even when this was not the case, examples of practical application of new knowledge and capacities were always provided.

Training: the main avenue for capacity building.

Training has been a main avenue for capacity building and had reached many diverse stakeholders. We consistently got good feedback from participants from UHRC, civil society, media, judiciary, police forces. Training has been effective so far, and praised. It equipped the participants we met with skills, knowledge that not only improved them as individuals, but were actually applied in their own work. In particular, UHRC staff - from their perspective of both trainer and trainee - indicated that trainings were spot on and addressed real capacity gaps.
The evaluation looked in depth at training, and consolidated actionable, practical feedback to improve effectiveness of training from diverse types of stakeholders (civil society, government representative, and media). Feedback was consistent across them, and several observations recurred.

Capacity building for human rights defenders

During the evaluation we had the opportunity to look deep into a subset of capacity building initiatives: capacity building for HRDs - one of the main avenues of engagement with civil society by OHCHR. The deeper insights we got re: engagement with civil society relate to the work done with women HRDs. This is a newly constituted network of human rights defenders that OHCHR supported: in coming together and with training (the official inception meeting of the network happened as we visited the country).

We explored dimensions of empowerment within a focus group. Participants felt they had acquired diverse forms of power). It is very positive to see that empowerment was not skewed versus the obvious outcomes (personal skills), but had important outcomes also in the areas of "power OVER" and "power

WITH" as demonstrated in the below diagram. All these power had actually led to tangible changes in their lives and in their organizations.

TO (resources, services)	WITHIN (knowledge, skills, attitudes)
● Database protection of information ● Resources for women with disabilities	● Self-confidence ● Upgrading professionally ● Understanding/knowledge of Human rights ● New attitude towards certain groups (LGBTQ+) ● Advocacy skills ● Documenting and reporting on human rights ● Training/Facilitation skills on human rights ● Capacities for mainstreaming women rights in the organisation ● Empowering People with disabilities on their rights
WITH (linkages, networking, partnerships)	OVER (access, engagement with institutions)
● Networking skills ● Expanded networking with other Women WHRDs ● General networking (NGOS, CSO, other state agencies)	● Empower women with disabilities to demand justice ● Visibility of our work ● Knowledge on Fundraising ● Power to hold government accountable

A questionnaire revealed very positive views and reported significant impact:

4,14
(out of 5)
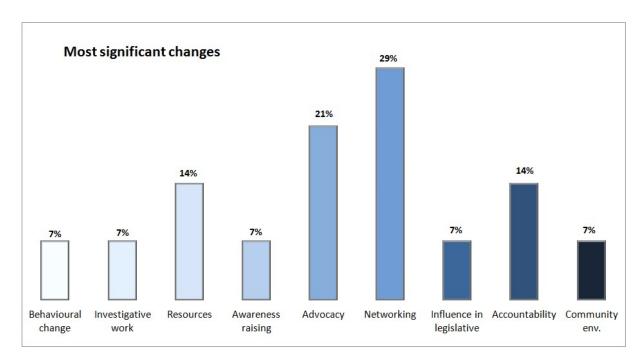
More knowledge, capacities

3,81
(out of 5)

Acquired capacities are used

Respondents reported very high improvements of knowledge and capacity

Acquired capacity were actually used: for example, to monitor human rights, to engage with other actors (often governmental ones)

The diagram below shows capacity building outcomes - as captured by the questionnaire. They are arranged from personal attitude shifts - to the left - to more substantial, systemic changes.

Most significant changes

Behavioural change	Investigative work	Resources	Awareness raising	Advocacy	Networking	Influence in legislative	Accountability	Community env.
7%	7%	14%	7%	21%	29%	7%	14%	7%

The left side included all that pertains to the individual capacity and attitude to drive change. Comments, for example, such as "*I have less fear to access information*" as well as mentions of improved investigative skills.

Further down the line, we found examples of increased capacity to do **evidence-based advocacy**; of **networking**; of **actual influence on legislation**; of **demands for accountability to authorities** and **overall community environment impact**.

Capacity building, beyond the training

Capacity building is often equated to "training". But trainings might be overwhelming when they tend to be the main option for action. Some participants lamented this. What complementing alternatives exist? OHCHR already demonstrated the value of alternative approaches.

● **Monitoring linked seamlessly with capacity building:** Direct monitoring visits helped to share capacity. Issues could be discussed and addressed during joint visits to prisons or police outpost. As explained by a police commander, "*We do joint inspections. We get findings and recommendations together. If we found a problem, we discuss: what can we do next time?*" These practical discussions and learning on the spot seem to have also impacted on institutional practices of government bodies.
● **Coaching in-situ:** Civil society partners also stressed the importance of accompaniment by staff with strong expertise - a practice done by OHCHR staff.
● **Facilitative, hands-on approaches**: OHCHR had initially supported the government in its human rights treaty bodies reporting, by providing consultants at the request of the Government. But it emerged that this was a missed opportunity to build institutional capacity and lessened ownership of the process ("When you participate in the preparation of a report you own it, and you also want to follow up!"). The approach was redesigned to become more facilitative: a consultant facilitates the information collection on the process and helps to systematize it, involving directly government officers.

There are, however, many other options for building capacity, which we found insufficiently implemented, for example:

● **Use of new technologies for training:** Many organizations worldwide had started to invest in online training options, for example in MOOCs (Massive open online course)-type of training. Online modules might be quite effective to spread out basic information. Another option is to use facilitated platforms to refresh trainings and to maintain contact with participants. We did not find, however,

evidence of use of any online options - or even options to support follow up through online engagement. Connection might sometimes still be challenging now, but options for effective online networking are rapidly increasing and were demanded for.

- **Sharing systematized information:** checklists, practical "how-to" products are also very helpful to disseminate practices and learning. They can be used within trainings or as stand-alone. And they could be disseminated through a variety of means (posters, flyers, social media). But such materials have not been produced / circulated.
- **Skills share / shared learning options**: HRD and other actors often expressed a genuine desire to learn what others are doing. And even our brief exposure to the Ugandan context revealed that there are many interesting practices and innovations that would be worth sharing. Why "teaching" when participants can be put in the driving seat? Current capacity building activities do not always seem to give sufficient space to the sharing of practices. We saw, that during trainings the microphone has been passed sometimes around, inviting participants to share their experience. But this had not really be a systematized practice, and the sharing remained quite superficial. Options for sharing of practices (=share the learning) - and, even better, support to build networks with capabilities for skill-share (=learning to share) will be key for future collaborations. Participants to capacity building initiatives, had themselves highlighted the need for a stronger network building and sharing, to be integrated within capacity building initiatives.

The importance of good capacity assessment for capacity building.

Capacity assessment (linked to capacity building strategies) should be strengthened. This applies, in particular, to training for civil society actors.

- **Who is left out?** During the evaluation we encountered local organizations with a long-term commitment on human rights monitoring that had never interfaced with OHCHR. Yet, their capacity needs fully matched what OHCHR would provide. Despite the impressive outreach of the trainings, some gaps might remain. Of course, as a UHRC staff said: "But we cannot train everybody!". It is important, however, to ensure that whoever is left out, is left out by design, not forgotten.
- **Focus training**. The future seems to be in focused, strategic areas of engagement, where training becomes part of a broader strategy of change - such as the case for training for cultural leaders and small miners on their rights vs foreign companies. Finding the niches, finding the key stakeholders within the niche with stronger mapping is an essential step.
- **Whose content, whose priorities?** Partners and local actors are growing stronger. There are a number of initiatives, in addition to the ones by OHCHR, which also contribute to supporting their capacity. In this context, capacity needs cannot be assumed, but need to be assessed, involving them, as demanded by several representatives of local organizations. Training should be oriented to specific gaps and be strategic. A consultative process for structuring training is needed.
- **Capacity building was well integrated with monitoring:** There has been a virtuous circle, especially in relation with the work with HRDs: monitoring helped to identify organizations active in defending human rights, and in parallel targeted them with training. Another virtuous circle was realized with police and armed forces: monitoring would help to identify challenges, and training could specifically address them.
- **Risk of duplication:** as emphasized in the case of media training, other organizations/networks are also providing training. And their training has been described as better suited to their specific needs and better followed up. As part of the stakeholder mapping, a better assessment of existing training capacities and initiatives would avoid duplication (and, possibly, open avenues for collaboration).
- **Target content to diverse audiences**. Training has tended to be "one size fits it all" even when attendants had actually very different background and knowledge. This could be addressed within events (for example, with parallel sessions and group work) or by designing diverse sets of trainings, more adapted to different levels of expertise (which also includes considering the use of local language / of a broader range of options for adult education). The need for having training content and formats to reach the grassroots was also stressed.

Replication, outreach

We heard repeated pledges for more activities, more training, more outreach. The direct coverage of OHCHR activities is a fraction of the country needs. For example, media trainings might end up reaching one journalist per district on average, in the areas where it operates. This is obviously not sufficient to create a critical mass.

OHCHR seems to have evolved from one-off training to more consistent processes of accompaniment - as already emphasized by the previous review. There is, however **a trade-off amongst longer exposure and coverage.** It then becomes key to ensure that the people reached are also better positioned to ensure uptake, dissemination, follow on.

- **There is a vast need for capacity building at the very grassroots.** The importance of reaching the grassroots was often emphasized, by different actors (e.g. civil society, by the police). The current prevalent model is deemed insufficient: training is perceived as too selective, and there are challenges in disseminating it further. Reaching to the grassroots shall involve different approaches (where knowledge travel to people, rather than bringing people together in centralized training). Some options were tested in field offices - for example reaching out lower rank police officers in remote outposts. But these modalities were resource intensive and had not led to design replicable options for upscaling.
- **Work towards trickle down, think practical options.** For training to "trickle down" is important to better address specifically and practically how capacities at the grassroots will need to be built. Some HRDs, for example, shared their desire to disseminate the knowledge acquired but highlighted, at the same time, that they lacked the means (e.g. financial, logistical) and the competencies to do so (e.g. adequate communication and dissemination capacities, skills for knowledge sharing).

When asking about the best option to broaden knowledge sharing, emphasis was put on "training of trainers". But we would be very weary in supporting it, unquestioned. One of the assumptions for many ToTs, is that the same training will be replicated over and over, and cascades down. But the evaluator's experience is that often the quality decreases rapidly down the chain. (which seems the case also for other initiatives in Uganda. For example, police officers reported that trainees on general election and general freedoms, organized in partnership with UHRC "*were supposed to pass on the knowledge. But it would have been better to have the training first hand*")

- **If ToT is the option of choice, then invest in strong packages.** When training of trainers is the option of choice, it is important in invest in design and support. This involves designing proper manuals and toolkits, ensuring that trainers are thoroughly trained (it is not enough to have received a training to replicate it!); setting a support mechanism for trainers. Such options are not yet in place, and government representatives had eagerly asked for this.
- **Support for trainers … or for disseminators?** HRDs strongly shared the need to pass on content. But what will really need to be shared? In some cases, the need is for replication. But, elsewhere, the content to pass down the chain is not the full training, but simpler, more actionable content (for example: one specific method for engagement; core messages, tailored for specific groups). This is where capacity building and replication start to morph in mass sensitization, for outreach. At the grassroots level, the need might not be for formal training, but for lighter, hands-on options for knowledge sharing. Or for diverse and less formal options for sharing knowledge: through accompaniment, social media, word of mouth,

Cross cutting activities: communication.

Communication is a very important cross-cutting set of activities. However, it has not been made explicit within OHCHR approaches. Communication, here, is not only understood as the traditional "the comms department", but as the broader spectrum of actions to share information and evidence about rights. Monitoring, training, partnership, networking, sensitization, awareness raising… have all strong

components of communication. The effectiveness of OHCHR activities largely depend on its effectiveness in communicating.

What communication options / channels are now in place?

The country programme is already well aware about the need to invest in communication, but also of its own limitations in doing so. The recruitment of a communication officer is pending and a media engagement strategy is lacking. The programme currently shares information through a range of avenues, but on an ad-hoc basis, as per the box

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● **updates through OHCHR/UN channels** (weekly update, Africa Branch Circular, UN country team newsletter); This information is mostly internal to the UN . To note that the website is not up to date.
● **public reports.** halted since 2014;
● **website:** it has not been regularly updated, and substantial content is very old;
● **social networks:** they are minimally used (the twitter account sent 70 tweets and has less than 300 followers as Dec 2019. The Facebook page scores better, with 2300+ followers / like, but it is not often updated);
● **reporting (to OHCHR)**: Information about the programme is also shared internally in the OHCHR PMS system [efficiency / impact orientation sections];
● **reporting (to donors):** Information about programmes and achievements is shared by OHCHR with donors through periodic reporting. There has been some challenges in respecting the timing - also due to staff turnover (suggesting the need to strengthen systems for reporting) - now being addressed. Reporting are short (which is good) but tend to focus on activities / outputs: they do not really provide an overall understanding of change and trends. Donors did not find them informative and pointed out that meaningful content is currently better shared in face to face interactions and briefings;
● **supporting other HR organizations reports**: OHCHR had also supported the publication and dissemination of other organizations (e.g. situational analysis of persons with albinism by Uganda Equal Opportunities Commission);
● **newspaper supplements:** OHCHR had also produced newspaper supplements, for Human Rights Day.

Despite the existence of several channels, it is quite hard to get an overview of the work in country. Or to access engaging narratives of change that give justice to the work done by OHCHR (and effectively communicate HR issues in Uganda). This impacts on the quality of accountability, but also on the potential for sensitization, advocacy, outreach. It calls for strengthening approaches to communication. This section will look at facets of communication that could be strengthened.

Engagement with media.

Engagement with media has not been strong. The CO had a very limited number of media events (limited to major public events). Some activities for media professionals - such as media training - were put in place. They were well received and led to positive outcomes.

When analysing models of interventions and engagement with diverse state powers, media work tended to emerge as the weakest component. Media professionals appreciated support in better dealing with human rights. But relatively few were reached, and many informants emphasized that media could indeed play a much stronger role within the OHCHR work. For example, they can reach and inform communities, through a vast range of programmes (some of which sponsored by particular organizations) which had involved activists, police, UHRC, etc... They can investigate abuses: directly or through an increasing network of contacts (also because of the raise of community journalism - an area where OHCHR seems to have invested little so far, but which is increasingly important).
Media still face challenges: there have been attacks to the press, and professionals might exert some self-censorship. The overall feeling, however, is also that media is becoming stronger and better capable to address human rights, and reach out and inform people. OHCHR itself relies a lot on media for its monitoring. The following points emerged re: strategies for media engagement:

● **training might not be the most effective avenue to engage with media professionals**. Training for journalists were very well received and impacted on the work of participants. They

reported changing their attitudes; they become more aware of sensitivities. But only a very limited number of journalists had been targeted, and there were no options for further dissemination. We were informed that other organizations and networks had provided more comprehensive trainings. In this context, coordination across initiatives will allow to complement efforts.

- **media can give visibility to achievements (but this should be budgeted for)** OHCHR had very little resources allocated for press statements. So their activities - for example contributions to new legislation - had tended to go under-reported. Setting, more consistently, media events (or building on synergies with other UN actors) will be really important to give the needed visibility of achievements, but also to inform civil society and the general public on enhancements of their rights and linked options to access them.
- **engagement with new media...** many of the journalist we met worked on newspaper / radio, and only a minority was engaged with the social media. We are unclear if this reflect a propensity of OHCHR to engage with traditional media over the new ones. The feeling is that new media and their potential for activism is not yet capitalized on. Uganda has still a relatively low penetration of internet - but this will only increase. It would be timely to invest in social media, both with a formative approach (helping people, possibly focusing on the youth, to better use new media to advance rights) but also with a preventive outlook (being aware of the risk for polarizing views, for spreading fake news, rumours, prejudices). OHCHR had engaged on some of these topics (e.g. staff mentioned an assessment on social media tax), but only to a limited extent.
- **...and with the old ones.** "old" media, the radio in particular, are effective in reaching out communities, in their languages, with programmes suited to their taste. But it appears that OHCHR had little invested on these.
- **protection of journalists is still an issue**. Despite progress, protection of journalists is still an issue. OHCHR should continue to have a role in strengthening capacity to this end (i.e. working with them as HRDs / monitors, creating more connection with existing civil society networks)
- **if media are not supported to report, victims might suffer**. Media representatives encountered have been very vocal about this point: OHCHR has not been very effective in providing them with news, and this had limited their capacity to crosscheck information and to support victims of abuses.
- **Communication for outreach.**

Awareness raising is only a minimal part of OHCHR investment. Yet there is a clear, strong need to ensure that citizens become more aware of their rights. In many cases the key for further progress on rights is that communities are sensitized about them. Whenever sensitization reached communities, people reportedly expressed great satisfaction "*Human Rights are the thing we have been lacking all along*" or "*had we known this before…*" and capacity to act on information (these comments have been reported by different actors, as we did not have direct access to communities). But how to get there? This has been highlighted as a challenge, by many actors among governmental and civil society organizations. The latter shared a need to rethink modalities for sensitization and broadening options for outreach, including with strategies for mass sensitization (with media and new media support). The following are the insights gathered:

- **To spread messages: simplify languages**. It was also recommended to shift from sharing complicated, textual brochures to visual materials. Materials produced by OHCHR are geared to people with relatively high literacy. The organization seems to lack content and materials designed for people at the margins, and with low literacy. The complexity of the materials reduces also the potential of replication / trickling down of training: content gets soon too abstract, too complex to be effectively shared.
- **Vary formats.** OHCHR mostly shares textual materials (publications). We saw banners in some offices, but they were only visible once inside - a missed opportunity for public information. Could OHCHR start to test different materials or media (e.g. posters, videos, theatre, radio programmes, music… etc) to reach a larger public? Creative approaches are needed to spread messages, possibly in conjunction with other actors and relevant campaigns.
- **Make ideas practical**. Informants expressed the need to access practical know-how, down to earth ideas - rather than concepts and theory not immediately applicable. Besides strengthening this aspects in its own training, OHCHR might also build partnerships to include these practical aspects in other

forums. Informants for example stressed that this could be a useful complement to the curriculum of the police force training schools. OHCHR might help translating abstract ideas (e.g. "human rights") into something actionable, in context.

● **Put yourself in the audience shoes: how do they see things now?** A police officer explained that "officers might violate human rights… and not be aware they violated them". In a context where traditional justice might involve the use of corporal punishment, the very idea of inhumane, degrading punishment might become blurred. Communication should be tailored to local perception, without taking anything for granted.

	Production of materials for training / public information. OHCHR produced materials to complement training and ongoing engagements (e.g. with the police) as the one pictured. It was displayed, visibly, in a local police office. This small example illustrates that public information products are welcome, and a possibility to explore. The example pictured could become even more effective by reducing reliance on english and written text as a medium, to increase understanding by all.

● **"per diem" expectations limit outreach:** the expectation that attendance to training is paid for can limit capacity building / sharing options, once financial support is withdrawn. The per-diem culture might limit the sustainability of existing forums for sharing of learning (e.g. coordination forums), as well as dissemination initiatives. A partner explained: "*Our problem is funds. When you reach communities, they expect to get logistics, food to get to the meeting. We need to do outreach within our available funds*". The office shall continue to work jointly with all stakeholders to address the systemic adverse effect of a per-diem culture (which - in country de-facto tend to be a big complement of salaries).

● **Identify, promote creative options for effective communication on rights by duty bearers.** Capacity building on rights should not only be externally driven. It might build on personal initiatives. We found out interesting initiatives put in place autonomously by duty bearers. For example, a police officer told us that, every Monday, he reads a chapter of the police forces' Standard Operating Procedures related to human rights to its staff. Could such virtuous practices be identified and promoted? (example sharing, discussing options and incentives to replicate them could be part of OHCHR negotiation and dialogue with institutions)

Communication for deeper accountability

The evaluation guidance gives a very top-down, contractual view of accountability ("*Obligation to demonstrate that work has been conducted in compliance with agreed rules and standards or to report fairly and accurately on performance results vis-à-vis mandated roles and/or plans*"). And we feel it is also reflected in current attitudes of the stakeholders we met. But more progressive, "downward" forms of accountability exist, oriented to dialogue and relationship-building across different actors (see, for example, the "accountablenow.org" initiative promoting accountability not as a report, but as dynamic relationship with stakeholders to improve the agency and credibility of civil society organizations). Such forms of accountability rests on the creation of effective **accountability / communication ecosystems**, where information about rights can flow. Being an important part of such ecosystem, OHCHR should also improve its own capacity for downward accountability and for sensitizing other actors to them.

An 'ecosystem' perspective suggests the importance of fostering "simple" ideas about accountability: citizen feedback reaching decision-makers; greater transparency. But we saw little practical action on this. This is highlighted here because communication has a key role within the ecosystem:

● **Communication to sensitize on national instruments**. Accountability requires information on national human rights instruments available. Even actors already working on human rights had not yet

been sufficiently sensitized on human rights to fully use the instruments at their disposal. Several informants, both from OHCHR and UHRC, mentioned that there are often more avenues for action than civil society or other actors might be aware of.

● **Communication on actors' roles**. The role, responsibilities and limitations of different actors is also not sufficiently understood. And this include clarity on the role of OHCHR and UHRC. If people do not understand the mandate, interaction is difficult. As a local actor representative for example put it "*people sometime want us to do something that could backfire. As much as we get together in the platforms, we are also moved by our organizational rules! And we might be pushed in a tricky place*. When confidential channels are used, when procedures are sensitive, civil society actors might feel that nothing is happening, and lose trust. Lack of communication may then create a sense that OHCHR is not following on important issues. The Apaa occupation case has been a positive example in this context since, by creating interaction, it had actually been an opportunity to clarify stances and issues.

The Apaa occupation: an opportunity for better reciprocal understanding of roles.
In summer 2018, approximately 230 members of the Apaa community occupied the OHCHR office. People had legitimate concerns: the OHCHR office was already aware of their situation, as they had monitored their situation before. UHRC had also already taken steps on this issue. As the community escalated the protest through the occupation, the situation became highly political and challenging. OHCHR managed not to burn bridges as they followed on the case, through confidential channels and under heavy pressure. OHCHR was respectful of the occupiers. It did not support them but it nevertheless did not force them out, and helped to bring them at the negotiating table with the government. They had a safe space to raise their concerns, which were, indeed heard. Overall the occupation generated new understanding, potential alliances (for example, representatives of the security forces took the opportunity to check claims first hand). The interactions along the occupation also helped stakeholders to clarify their roles, responsibilities. There where frictions, misconceptions, tensions. Activists would have liked to see a stronger stance and direct action by OHCHR. Media would have wanted to get more access to information. National and international actors were keen to avoid prolonging the occupation. Interactions, helped to clarify roles and responsibilities. And to appreciate the complementarities of different actors. Apaa could be transformed into an opportunity if all these involved take stock from this experience. OHCHR has a convening role: in bringing diverse actors together at one table, to follow through on the concerns, but also to understand better what synergies can be strengthened to support communities claiming their rights.

● **Communication on achievements.** Accountability rests in capacities to gauge achievements regarding promises and commitments made. The evaluation looked at it from many angles: the capacity of OHCHR (and other actors) to share an assessment of progress, the capacity of civil society to monitor these themselves. We saw some attempts to share such information publicly (e.g. with the database for the monitoring of the implementation of human rights mechanisms' recommendations). But overall awareness of the importance and of options for use of "open data" (notwithstanding the sensitivities of some types of information, of course) seems to have been lacking.
● **Creations of discussion platforms**. Besides a better-informed understanding of mandates, provisions and evidence there is the need to create spaces for discussion on how to improve shortcomings. Many accountability initiatives in other countries thrived on the platforms provided by international institutions, bringing together different actors. OHCHR would be very well positioned to provide such platform. There are embryonic attempts at platform building for accountability on protection - such as the Karamoja Regional Protection Meeting - but still very limited in outreach.
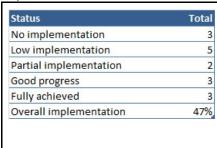
Efficiency

This section will look at the efficiency of the programme in using its resources to achieve its outcomes. As pointed in the methodology section, it will do so looking at 3 main efficiency areas (operational management, cost-effectiveness and result based budgeting) broken down into 11 indicators, which also cover the concerns highlighted in the evaluation questions:

● synergies with donors and other actors in the country
● cost efficiency and cost effectiveness concerns

- adequacy to local context and stakeholders
- coordination and support with CO and other administrative bodies within the UN
- quality and disaggregation of data, use of performance information in decision making (note the further insights on monitoring and evaluation will be shared in the evaluability section)

This section has been informed by very strong background analysis.

Implementation status of recommendations of the Country Programme Review (2016)

Status	Total
No implementation	3
Low implementation	5
Partial implementation	2
Good progress	3
Fully achieved	3
Overall implementation	47%

It contained 16 recommendations linked to all five main evaluation criteria. Out of the 16 recommendations nearly half have been addressed - the rest being still not implemented (relating to data collection, management and visibility -M&E capacity, visibility and public reporting) or at a low implementation phase (relating strategic management - streamlining activities and overall strategy plus developing training strategies). Three recommendations have been fully achieved (related to the sustainability of the office) and 3 are in good progress (related to networking and building up renovated relationships with partners).

Efficiency: an overview

The evaluation assessed the efficiency of the CO Uganda using 2017 as a case study. As explained in the methodological section standards and associated indicators are chosen from empirical experience and backed up with theoretical references from the auditing, value for money, cost-effectiveness and result based budgeting and management practices. The section is then structured to look first at financial and management rules and direct link of costs to the intervention (based of operational management auditing principles); secondly, looking at the correct balance of resources according to results and social value (coupling cost-effectiveness and social value for money); and thirdly, analysing the design and management (in the light of result based budgeting and management principles).The assessment included UNDP and OHCHR procurement regulations though it is not backed up by an audit of the Country office (last specific CO audit on carried out on 2016).

Summary table of key findings

Operational management	Medium	• Thorough regulatory documents, procurement and regulatory processes; • Cumbersome procurement practices not always adequate to circumstances. Scarce access to local prices. • Good general traceability. Specifics are missing (e.g. by donors / gender tracking). • Overemphasis on direct management reduces potential for empowerment (including on financial issues)
Cost-effectiveness	Medium	• Adequate distribution of financial resources towards key major results • Not balanced distribution of budget per vulnerable groups; not adequate organisation of human resources; no strong synergies used.
Result-based management & budgeting	Low	• Activity-based budgeting allowing aggregation at results level • Lack of integration of budgeting / results-based management in the actual decision making process

As outlined above, the overall efficiency of the CO Uganda is medium/low. The strongest features of the Uganda CO relate to the sound financial control mechanisms and to budget allocations (distribution per

type of activities / target groups). The weakest are adaptability to local context; access to local prices; and availability of mechanisms to integrate financial resources planning and monitoring in the decision-making processes.

Operational management

The first evaluation core standard related to operational management is broken down into 5 indicators:

1. Thorough formal administrative and financial procedures, adapted to circumstances and context:

[1] The Country Office has sound and well detailed UNDP financial and procurement policies and human resources procedures; as well as financial payments and procurement procedures for expenditures over 2,500 USD (expenditures below the threshold are processed by CO Uganda, channelled through UNDP payment procedures). Relationships both with UNDP and OHCHR Geneva (when procurement processes require Geneva intervention) are perceived as smooth and swift and main drawbacks are processes (procurement and human resources especially), not communication flows. The main drawbacks of the financial and procurement procedures comes from the little adaptation to circumstances and context. Time-frames were too long (some payments were delayed for over one-month, which can be challenging for some beneficiaries; as per UN rules, reimbursements were not paid in cash and bank procedures inefficient); payment procedures inconvenient (the requirement of presenting a national identity card was considered inadequate for high level functionaries); recruitment processes where too long (around six months and up to one year to cover a short-term temporary position). As a government officers summed this up with this example: "*Here everybody drives, no one uses local transport. The transport system does not work. They use public transport rates. And you cannot pay cash, you need to send money to the bank. Then people do not turn up for the meeting. You did not design your system to be alert to the context.*"

Several stakeholders stressed the importance for OHCHR to move away from direct payments to grants, or to make procedures more agile. For example, it was lamented that requiring judiciary system's magistrates to sign even for minimal expenses is counterproductive, and culturally inappropriate.

The Uganda country office does not sub-grant other organization and tends to go for direct implementation. Direct implementation ensures much more control on how money is handled, but it is more disempowering for partners - as discussed with both civil society organizations and international donors. Direct implementation, when interfacing with mature actors, has been seen as a hindrance, a lack of trust, a missed opportunity on capacity building for civil society actors. Notwithstanding the need to address potential corruption, OHCHR and donors should balance interests embedded in their financial practices.

Moving from tight procedures and overemphasis on direct control would be seen as a welcome step towards stronger partnerships building and mutual trust.

2. Financial monitoring system traceability

Financial systems are well developed to trace all expenditures and crosscheck through list of invoices, bank reconciliations (at UNDP level) coupled with in-house manual expenses tracking and Inter office vouchers (IOV). Systems allowing for inclusion of donor's financial codes at work-plan activity allow proper traceability, and the CO started working on this.

Currently however, the planning documents in place use different financial coding schemes (e.g.: the work plan codes do not match the PMS codes and the 2017 End-of-year report does not match the 2017 AWP) which makes difficult the tracking processes doubling the work from the finance department. Gender wise, the system does not track or forecasts gender expenses.

3. Financial cross-checking procedures;

[2] The financial system from UNDP (procurement procedures) is very strong in cross-checking the correct use of the budget, but the bureaucracy involved in it came at a cost: excessive rigidity, long delays. This was a major complaint, by many actors. Many actors denounced having to wait for months, to get refunds. Government officers participating to joint mission with OHCHR shared they had to advance money from their own pocket to pay for hotels. Payment / procurement procedures, in particular, and formalities and delays in processing Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) payments, generated very negative perceptions and mistrust. This is backfiring on the actual programmes and partnerships. Several small issues (e.g.: wrong bank account number, misspelling of names, partners delays in providing attendance lists) caused delays. But the main problem was systemic: the excessive rigidity of procurement and financial procedures (e.g. re: ID identification requirements; bank account overall payment procedure; etc.).

Some discontent might be softened by the new procurement and financial rules (e.g.: attendance lists will be required 21 days in advance with the new UMOJA system theoretically addressing the challenge of payment delays), but there will still be a need to improve and adapt procedures, in line with the nature of the work.

4. Best-deal policy (costs considering both market prices and quality) and access to local prices:

The UNDP system includes long-term agreement models on financial and administrative services provided to other UN agencies in the country, initially conceived both procurement and price-wise. However, they seem to be far over the average local prices (examples were given of stationery purchases at a much lower prices). The margin for ad hoc negotiation by the office is very limited. The office has a well-developed policy on DSAs policies and rates, agreed amongst all UN and main donor countries stakeholders. But there is discontent, as DSA rates are judged too low by some recipients.

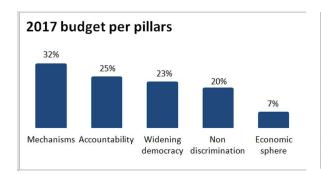### 5. Clear direct link of project expenses and staff to outputs.

An activity-based planning, coupled with direct implementation by the Country Office itself (only a very minimal proportion of the 2017 budget is devoted to outsourcing training), ensures a strong direct link of all expenses to the outputs sought. No deviation has been spotted in this regard during the assessment.
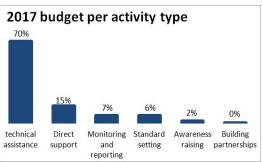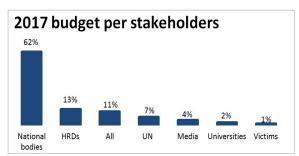
Cost-effectiveness

The second core standard used by the evaluation included four indicators:
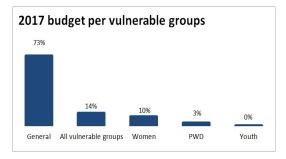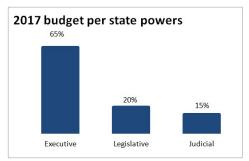
1. Balanced budget vs outputs and outcomes

The Annual Work Plan budget allow analysis per: type of activities; outcomes; target groups, vulnerable groups, etc. But such analysis is not routinely done, and one additional challenge is that coding is now made at output and not activity level, leading to aggregations that are biased and imprecise (e.g.: coding output 4.1 and 4.2 as a technical assistance activity would not reflect monitoring, standard setting, and awareness raising activities included within the outputs). The evaluation has conducted a budget plan assessment according to 5 different types of variables that is included in below (coding all activities per type of activity, target group, pillar and vulnerable groups and state powers).

2017 budget per pillars

Mechanisms	32%
Accountability	25%
Widening democracy	23%
Non discrimination	20%
Economic sphere	7%

2017 budget per activity type

technical assistance	70%
Direct support	15%
Monitoring and reporting	7%
Standard setting	6%
Awareness raising	2%
Building partnerships	0%

2017 budget per stakeholders

National bodies	62%
HRDs	13%
All	11%
UN	7%
Media	4%
Universities	2%
Victims	1%

2017 budget per vulnerable groups

General	73%
All vulnerable groups	14%
Women	10%
PWD	3%
Youth	0%

2017 budget per state powers

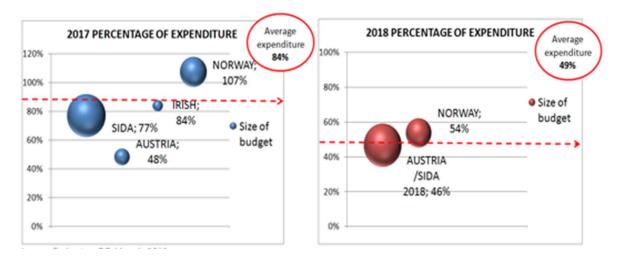|	
Executive	65%
Legislative	20%
Judicial	15%

The budget allocated to the pillars is evenly distributed. The international mechanisms pillar is the best resourced (32%) followed by rule of law and accountability (25%), widening the democratic space (23%), non-discrimination (20%). Only the economic sphere pillar (7%) lags behind. This distribution matches the country priorities and is coherent with the breakdown per target groups: 61% is devoted to state agents (and, within this 65,42% to the executive; 20% to legislative; 15% to judiciary). Activities implemented are more unevenly distributed: around 70% of the budget goes to technical cooperation assistance; only 15% to monitoring activities, a bare minimum to building partnerships, awareness raising or direct support. The target group analysis revealed that only 10% of the budget is specifically allocated to women, 3% to people with disabilities and no specific budget goes to other important groups (e.g. the youth).

The office has undergone several challenges related to the non-renewable mandate that have greatly affected human resources and expenditure capacity of the office given the short planning horizon. There are still challenges in integrating financial information in the strategic decision-making processes (as already pointed out by an internal review), an issue already spotted and currently being addressed by the office. Further, and as shown in the diagrams below, expenditures percentages have been as well affected and are being addressed.

2017 PERCENTAGE OF EXPENDITURE — Average expenditure **84%**

NORWAY; 107%
IRISH; 84%
SIDA; 77%
AUSTRIA; 48%
Size of budget

2018 PERCENTAGE OF EXPENDITURE — Average expenditure **49%**

NORWAY; 54%
AUSTRIA /SIDA 2018; 46%
Size of budget

2. Adequate human resources structure vs duties

Our review was not an organizational assessment but had nevertheless looked at human resources issues - which had been often emphasized as a challenge. The lack of clarity about the future of the Country Office had negative impact (e.g. turnover, morale, etc.). If OHCHR will continue to work in Uganda, a human resource review will need to take place according to the assessments already carried out internally.

3. Existing synergies and alternatives of implementation

The Country Office is demonstrating an increased capacity to liaise, to explore synergies with donors - e.g. with participation in donor groups and bilateral conversations. This has been highlighted by all donors as a very welcome improvement. The Country Office has also demonstrated capacity to revise and realign activities when they spotted duplication (e.g. when a duplication of activity was spotted in a GIZ funded project).

At UN level, OHCHR has some collaboration avenues both at national and at regional level (e.g.: as part of the UNCT coordination teams and leading the UNCT human rights and gender advisory group, as well as relevant UNDAF operational review groups). This collaboration is however still weak in efficiency terms as it is neither benchmarking nor exploring alternative implementation methods from other UN agencies.

4. Social Value for money

It is key to ensure that resources are used at best. The push towards a "value for money" methodology highlights this concern, but an unfortunate aspect of it has been a tendency to assess the value of the Country Office's interventions only in monetary terms. If OHCHR embarks on a stronger analysis of the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of its resources - in "value for money" terms -, it could break new, needed ground by assessing also social value.

For example, our evaluation spotted how executive stakeholders valued highly the work done by OHCHR on upgrading the national compliance with international human rights mechanisms. But civil society valued more the networking, capacity building on advocacy, and accountability channels created through the process. Acknowledging different priorities and perspectives on value should feed into financial decision making. It is important to recognize that budgeting may become political when assessing and adjusting financial resources.

Budget planning and management shall thus, include "investment vs. perceived value" assessment approaches (D'Emidio, 2017) complementing, enriching and tailoring result-based budgeting and incorporating "value for money" considerations, but from a social, and in the OHCHR case, a diplomatic angle.

Result-based management & budgeting

We assessed quality of result based management - promoted by OHCHR - on two indicators:

1. Budget breakdown vs results breakdown

The CO has a budget breakdown by activities and the PMS allows assessing certain types of outputs per types of costs (staff, operating and activity costs). At the output level it can then automatically aggregate budget information on spotlight populations, outputs planned by "shift" (as priorities are called) or by pillar.

The coding happens at the output level. But we observed that, by doing this, activities that would belong to different categories are lumped together (e.g.: a particular output may contain 7 different activities that are addressed to different vulnerable groups, mix different types of activities and target different stakeholders).

In this regard the CO started rearranging more comprehensive financial reports tagging budget lines at the activity level. These efforts by the country office would be in line with UN result based budgeting principles. Regarding gender based financial track and monitoring the CO is currently not including sound systems to allow for it.

2. Result based decision making

The evaluation found no evidence of regular processes leading to budget revision / corrections, linked with an assessment of outputs and/or outcomes achieved. We found instead evidence of a "push to spend" - to be in line with the expenditure plan - which is not linked to timely and complete financial expenditure updates. It appears that the financial department is isolated from the technical team. Lack of budget expenditure updates; lack of information on the financial status of activities, output and outcomes render financially informed decision making currently impossible. It is recommended to boost interaction and information flows between these thematic teams to inform their respective decision-making loops.

Impact orientation

To assess impact orientation, the evaluation:

- **outlined challenges hindering a quest for impact and looked for proxies.** For example, looking at evaluability issues and examining meaningful achievements regarding key tenets of HRBA;
- **assess impact *orientation*:** existence of processes and strategies to steer towards impact. Impact orientation is assessed alongside the comparative advantages of OHCHR, an aspect discussed at length within the relevance section.

Challenges and options to appreciate impact.

Impact level results - are far too broad and long term to be realistically appreciated. Even more so within a Country programme, where getting to outcomes is already a challenge. Both outcomes and impact are gauged mainly through descriptive narratives - with minimal evidence, and with highly subjective baselines and references. Better appreciation of impact would require:

stronger contextual analysis: it rests on availability of baselines and on capacity for data collection - at national level. However, a declared area for improvement for the government of Uganda (as stated in the national development plan - NDPII par 627) is precisely monitoring and evaluation capacity on developmental issues. The office seems to have made limited use of such data.

- **the attribution challenge**. OHCHR is only one of many other actors striving for change. The attribution challenge is well captured by this observation by a government officer: "There have been major developments for human rights in Uganda. They cannot all be attributed to OHCHR but they certainly had a role". It is important to shift towards models of impact assessment informed from theories of change (now lacking) that highlights contributions, rather than attribution.

Changes down the results chain cannot be assumed

A major assumption that tend to be made by the programme is: if systems are changed, there will be progress on human rights. Staff is actually aware that this might not well be the case, yet there are no measures, no options for follow up.

"Upstream" change		**"Downstream" changes**
Building system, capacities to transform dynamics for better governance and administration of rights, engaging "upwards"		Ensuring that changes in policies, systems, dynamics, setups actually lead to changes for these whose rights are violated, reaching "downwards", to citizens.

When working on national human rights instruments, actual changes are a long way down the line. Changes upstream - i.e. to influence policies and norms at the national level - are somehow tracked, but the "so what question" was rarely asked in the reporting and monitoring process by the office. Understanding how legislation policies will eventually impact on the lives of the (marginalized) rights-holders is - as one staff put - still the missing link. The last miles might remain elusive, but programmes changing dynamics upstream must spell out how change will eventually affect the situation downstream, rather than assuming that change will somehow happen.

Clearer anticipation of future pathways of change would allow for at least some purposive sampling, or to set strategies for follow up - but this was lacking within OHCHR Uganda. Needed actions within the remit of OHCHR to walk down the chain were never put in place. An OHCHR staff explained that sometimes even the duty bearers do not know that new laws, procedures exist. Or that the identified beneficiaries might not be made aware of rules and procedures. Attitude shifts in this regard were for

example observed in the area of business and HR where emphasis had been placed on ensuring that changes in regulations and possible resulting entry points for rights holders are known.

Options to look at downstream changes therefore might include:

- **Acknowledge that assessment of change is a collective endeavour.** Once OHCHR contributes to building "upstream change", the baton is then left to other institutions (e.g. UHRC, partner organizations, civil society). Changes are then pushed, managed, assessed by them. Who such actors are, what the likely follow up shall be need to be identified with a stronger analysis of the pathway for change. These actors will have insights, understandings of what happens down the chain, and possibly also have evidence. But, if there is no effort in tracking the pathways of change, it is very likely that they will work in isolation, and their understandings and evidence will never be merged. As it is the case now. This calls for a more incisive aggregation and collective assessment of progress. This is overall now lacking but it could build on a clear comparative advantage of OHCHR (on convening and on monitoring HR).
- **Accountability measures.** It is also important to invest in accountability measures (and on their communication) to make sure that citizens who shall benefit from new legislation or policy setups are aware of them - and of the channels at their disposals to denounce shortcomings. We found little evidence of such measures (beside the "Citizen's handbook on access to justice"). Ensuring that structural downward accountability measures are properly put in place equates to "outsource" part of the investment in monitoring and evaluation: citizens (and their allies) can be empowered to monitor first hand. And duty-bearers, by being responsive and keeping track of citizen feedback can, in turn, gauge impact.
- **Pilots:** Another very valuable strategy for change, which OHCHR is also using, is a process of *pre-institutionalization*: where changes and options are first tried and tested on the ground - for example regarding work done with the judiciary on witness protection. Efforts for scaling up the initiative on a national base or to integrate it in national laws then follows.
- **Seek for impact where you can.** When working from field locations - or when engaging with activists, it is easier to see how the impulse given by a programme translates into actual changes in the lives of people. Local partners of OHCHR have reported improvements. But, other than anecdotal examples, positive impact is still little recorded and consolidated by the programmes. More efforts should be put in tracking impact evidence, as this is not happening now. (This last consideration does not only apply to downstream change, but to all types of impact).

Strategies for impact

Getting to impact requires strong strategies and theories of change, or clear adaptive mechanisms to navigate uncertain contexts. We found no explicit setup for any of them. This seems to be due to:
- **uncertainty about the future of the country programme**: a strategy would require a clear timeframe, whilst the office has been struggling with the impossible task of trying to think long term- but within a non-renewable mandate.
- **transitioning towards development, but with an unclear focus.** transitioning to development meant that the potential focus of the office broadened: from conflict related work to "all rights for the whole country". This required adaptation, reprioritization. The fact that there is really little clarity, globally, about what an OHCHR office should be and do in developmental context did not help. The burden of creating this understanding fell on the Country Office.
- **lack of strong processes** Lack of strategy does not mean that actions were not done with strategic intent. On the contrary, when asking staff to illustrate their work, strategic connections and orientation to impact (or understanding of the limitations that their action had in achieving impact) were evident. The country office seemed to lack processes that could effectively capture such strategy.

> **Strategic processes**
> Some of the processes put in place by OHCHR had the potential to support strategic orientation. This box

lists them and notices that, beyond the PMS, other promising setups have been tested. They could be scaled up, and linked to a clear road map (rather than be employed one off, with relatively little follow up and monitoring)

- **Updating the Performance Monitoring System, PMS:** this seems to absorb the largest chunk of planning / monitoring work. PMS work has built on other processes, with an emphasis on the planning side (e.g. annual planning meetings).
- **Participatory strategy settings**. as explained in the relevance section, it is a process where each team could set its own actions and priorities, to then be consolidated at the country level. The consolidation process, however, tended to simply "slot all activities in the plan" rather than facilitate convergence and integration amongst teams. No clear mechanism for participatory revision was connected to it.
- **Participatory periodic reviews and reflection with partners.** they have been regularly held amongst OHCHR and the UHRC teams, in particular in Karamoja, and could be used more widely. [see effectiveness chapter].
- **Rotations for exposure**. The Moroto team had an interesting practice of making staff work not only on their thematic areas, but to also expose to other tasks and engagement when appropriate. Through direct involvement they could share learning and practices and get more experience / exposure.

Sustainability

In looking at sustainability, this section
- starts by addressing questions focusing on the durability of achievements and benefits. In doing so it assesses investment in structural changes, in organizational systems and in the capacities and attitudes of actors;
- it stresses the needs to go beyond the usual understanding of sustainability by incorporating a future orientation and risk management in OHCHR approaches;
- It finally focuses on the current exit strategy, to gauge progress and limitations of it - emphasizing also options for the way forward.

Are changes likely to be durable?

We consolidated evidence on sustainability of results under three main headings: structural changes (e.g. changes in legislation, policies, organizational setups), organizational systems (strengthening systems within organizations), capacities (ensuring that all the above can be used, by rights-aware actors).

Investment in structural changes:

Many informants emphasized how OHCHR contributed to stronger HR foundations for Uganda. Investment in structural changes has been an integral component of its work (especially with the state actors). It included improvements in legislation, incorporation of SDGs and HRBA in national plans and strategies, etc. The main challenge within this area of work was focus. Some structural priorities were clear, and easy to identify. For example, engagement with national plans, or with key state bodies, such as the HR Parliamentary Committee and the UHRC.
Beyond the clearly identifiable core, priority setting was challenging. In the widening democratic space area, work was done in connection with new networks and established umbrellas such as the Human Rights Defender network. But engagement in other OHCHR thematic area (international mechanisms, rule of law, and countering discrimination) was uneven and calls for more strategizing.
For example, OHCHR had a positive engagement with a number of selected bodies, e.g. the National Disability Council. But it is unclear where this could lead to in the long term: is it really a priority for OHCHR to strategize within a budget stretched organization - rather than leveraging for more structural changes? (i.e. not stopping at the individual body but boosting its significance and role within the overall system).

Investment in organizational systems:

OHCHR has also invested in organizational systems and processes for its partners.

- **Databases**: OHCHR has supported two databases: one for state actors, to improve accountability on HR recommendations; and one for civil society actors, to support monitoring. The Human Rights Recommendations Database is an online platform developed in 2014 – 2017 and hosted by UHRC with support from OHCHR, as a comprehensive tool for monitoring implementation of all human rights mechanisms recommendations. The uptake of this tool is currently very low, with most of the entries not updated. The database is in the process of being rolled out to all Ministries, Departments and Agencies, who will be able to enter information on progress made to implement recommendations. OHCHR is hopeful that uptake will increase. The HRD database for the monitoring of cases was promoted and shared with a large number of civil society organizations (but we found gaps in dissemination), and it was well received. We could not look into it and its usage and assess its potential to be sustained, as it was being upgraded during the evaluation.
- **calendar setting on international obligations.** Clear calendars on deadlines and requirements of international human rights mechanisms helps to avoid rushed, last minute work - or delays. OHCHR is now collaborating with governmental institutions to create a regular structure for discussion on progress, with clear deadlines - learning from experiences. The inter-ministerial committee has responsibility to follow it. Government representatives emphasized that checking adherence with calendars of obligations (re the international system) should have been a priority

early on of OHCHR. They indicated that OHCHR did not check if reporting deadlines were duly respected (e.g. on ICCPR, CAT, CEDAW, etc.) until very recently in the engagement.

● **A checklist to make legislation rights-complaint.** OHCHR is supporting the revision of checklists to help parliament and its human rights committee to make new legislation human rights compliant. It should have been launched as the evaluation took place, but the event was delayed. It is based on an existing one, too broad for good uptake: it was revised and simplified. It might be a good step to ensure future integration of human rights, but it is now premature to gauge if, once revised, this tool will have a good uptake.

Investment in capacities

The effectiveness section already looked, in depth, at capacity development. It had emerged as a clear strength of OHCHR. It was valued by all informants. Government partners strongly emphasized how joint work and training had improved capacities. Civil society actors shared how approaches, knowledge, attitudes have been appropriated, owned and applied.

> **Improved advocacy**:
> The following is a story of change collected through our questionnaire to OHCHR training participants:
> "As a result of improved skills in advocacy we were tired of presenting issues to duty bearers without reaching their positive response. We decided to come together as CSO in Lira. We conducted joint health service monitoring and duty bearers were put in the forefront and they were able to see the issues themselves and act upon them. The advocacy session played a lot of role in this. We were able to use different means to have the leaders act on the critical issues"

The following insights and suggestions might further improve capacity building sustainability.

● **Ensuring that capacity stays as people move.** Government officers shared that their staff members are transferred often and the new ones are not trained. When we met newly appointed staff, they were aware of prior training and engagements with OHCHR. But we found no evidence of measures to ensure that capacity remain embedded in the system (e.g. handover guidance, reference materials). Turnover in stakeholders' staff was also a challenge for OHCHR staff on the ground: they had often to start from scratch, in raising awareness and in strengthening networks. On the positive side, as people move, they might become ambassadors of knowledge: capacities might reach places that had not been initially targeted. But we could not check if this was happening, and we found no evidence of support to this type of knowledge transfer.

● **Follow up.** The closest partners could enjoy repeated exposure to capacity building opportunities (e.g. new training session, coaching on the job). Even so, capacity building engagement sometimes seemed disconnected. It was suggested that a stronger follow up, checking progresses, emerging needs and, achievements could have strengthened the capacity consolidation process and their relevance. Other training participants emphasized the importance to continuing "*lubricating*" new knowledge with follow up and updates. But there are no channels in place where this can happen. Internet, social media, for example, could help to create networks of Human Rights Alumni, or at least to share news and highlights.

● **Lasting connections:** workshops did not always build networks and relations ("...events do not even allow for space to present newcomers..."). It was a missed opportunity to create valued networks for mutual support.

Future orientation.

In Uganda, as elsewhere! - national actors, with different and contrasting goals, are active. Uganda sits in a region where challenging dynamics are in place. So, progress on rights cannot be taken for granted: the human rights environment must be resilient and future proof. A police officer captured well the need for a future orientation by saying "*human rights are like a hospital. You might think you do not need it today. But you must build it for the time you will need it*".

The evaluation revealed the lack of a perspective on future risks (and opportunities) within the programme, to be informed soundly by a risk management process. *Risk* is referred here as the likelihood that human rights are eroded (or improved). Human rights will make people more resilient… but the resilience of human rights themselves needs to also be ensured. Some elements of the *risk management cycle* could be identified, as below, but not within an explicit risk framework or coherently applied to all endeavours - which would strengthen strategic capacity for action.

● **Response / rehabilitation**: what to do when risk actually materialize? These are areas where OHCHR has obvious expertise, having engaged in it since the time of conflict. Which of these competencies could be passed on to local actors? OHCHR has done substantial work in this area, sharing competencies for response to UHRC and civil society.
● **Preparedness**: what measures can be put in place to "brace"- when risk is felt imminent - to minimize its *effects*? OHCHR has for example engaged in preparedness measures at election time (we could however not assess their effectiveness within the evaluation). Several actors have expressed concerns about volatility of some areas. For example, Karamoja, where new business, climate change and land issues (and the population movements and claims linked to that) might all contribute to potential conflict. Or Apaa, where the local community is at risk of displacement. The issues are known and monitored, but no preparedness measures are in place. In both cases, local actors believe that OHCHR should have done more to this extent. Building up UHRC early warning systems is a good example of measures in this line.
● **Mitigation / prevention**: is it possible to ensure that the likelihood of risk is minimized - or removed altogether - by acting on its *root causes*? Working on human rights structure is of course an important preventive measure, per se. However, prevention needs to be more deliberate, with stronger risk assessment and structural interventions. OHCHR is actually in the process of positioning itself to better address some of the "new frontier issues" which emphasize a structural action on root causes of potential future conflicts. - and possibly looking at who is more likely to be discriminated.

It is evident that walking all strategies and activities through the whole risk management cycle will help to incorporate a fuller set of measures for sustainability and resilience. The risk management cycle needs also to be made inclusive (i.e. ensuring that the specific vulnerabilities of groups which are at particular risk to see their rights eroded, are factored in context analysis)

Future orientation calls for strong **monitoring**, but of a different sort from the monitoring which we saw predominantly in use: from "revealing *violations*" towards "revealing *potential* for violations". Such monitoring is a key component of early warning, preparedness systems - which are now lacking. OHCHR and UHRC have a strong monitoring experience - which has now been passed on to civil society actors. As OHCHR has led the way in building capacities for monitoring on violations, it might now lead the way on building capacities on monitoring for preparedness. It would be well positioned to do so, because of its comparative advantages and because of its orientation towards frontier issues.

Phase out, when going onward.

Checking the phase-out strategy.
As the evaluation happened, a phasing out strategy was in place, as per the request by Government in view of its decision in 2017 to grant OHCHR a two year non-renewable extension. The phasing out strategy was set through a facilitated workshop with key OHCHR staff, and consultation with external stakeholders. I**t was a list of pending issues to be concluded before the end of the current host agreement. It** narrowed down the work of the office to strategic and urgent endeavours. It identified the "loose ends" that would need to get to closure - or, at least, to a clear milestone. The evaluation team reviewed the phasing out strategy and recommended that the following aspects should be paid attention to:

● **collaboration with the Justice, Law and Order sector, JLOs:** there are still many loose ends in the work with government actors, which should be careful identified and planned for. In general, the assessment shall be broken down to the different types of bodies depending on their functions: executive - political (taking advantage of the direct diplomatic strength of OHCHR), law enforcement (phase out shall be

> envisaged), independent oversight (phase out shall be formalised); legislative -including a customary laws (work to be done on general gender awareness raising, international mechanisms follow up, National Action Plan on business and human rights and pressure to government, etc.); and judiciary - including as well customary justice (transitional justice, dispute resolution, restorative justice mainstreaming, etc.);
> - **collaborations with civil society**. Some initiatives and networks among CSOs - e.g. the Women HRDs network - are still very fragile: they depend on the leadership of the initiators and on OHCHR support;
> - **assessment of capacity needs of governmental counterparts:** the "phase out" concept is not even yet conceived by main OHCHR partners in the field. A proper process is needed to identify areas where collaboration or assistance is not required any longer or steps towards phasing out;
> - **status check of progress on new legislation:** including also support needed for usage of the new checklist for legislation**;**
> - **sustainability of recent and promising areas of work,** such as frontier issues (e.g. land, human rights and business)
> - **exit strategy for the field offices**. The exit strategy is not clear re: field offices in the upcountry. There is yet no exit or phase out plan and no discussion with key partners such as UHRC. The Gulu office is already in exit mode (with a limited scope established from Kampala and few actions being implemented) and operates in a setup where mature civil society can take on action. The one in Moroto, however; is extremely active, and is a leading actor in the area. Phasing out should be carefully crafted to avoid undoing many of the progress achieved there.

When planning ahead for OHCHR engagement, a process to reboot the programme is needed. Each planned engagement should always include a phase out / handover process. OHCHR should also asses which engagements have already reached a point whereby change is significant and sustainable: further engagement would then be unnecessary and potentially disempowering. Government functionaries were keen to use autonomously the space they have been capacitated for. This call for a clear plan of action is needed, pinpointing what to hand-over and how to redefine the existing partnerships.

Gender

This section examines how a gender perspective; concerns about women/men equality; women's rights have been incorporated into the design and processes of the programme.

Gender - including specific concerns re: LGBTQ+ rights.

When gender is looked at in its entirety, Uganda has obviously been a very challenging context to operate within - in particular re: the rights of LGBTQ+ people. Resistance to "work on what should remain closed in the bedroom" was expressed by many national actors, across the spectrum. And it was clearly pointed out that work on LGBTQ+ rights is seen as a cultural and foreign intrusion. Existing definitions of gender and gender equality within the UN encourage binarism (i.e. it is reduced to a men vs women issue). A binary orientation is quite problematic, for a concept born to ensure that different orientations are acknowledged (it makes, for example, LGBTQ+ rights invisible). It is therefore very positive that OHCHR in Uganda has been capable to raise awareness of non-binary aspects of gender issues, and with the sensitivity required in context.

In line with the principles of equality and non-discrimination, the Office is inviting defenders of these rights as participants of wider capacity-building activities.
Other participants - even when not prompted with specific questions - expressed how exposure to the issue improved their understanding of the rights of LGBTQ+ people, and their willingness to work together.
The strategy chosen by OHCHR seems quite adequate in the circumstances. Supporting "change from within" avoided that OHCHR could be being seen as an actor imposing a perceived foreign agenda on a highly sensitive topic, and at a critical time. We could not, however, for time limitations, check the perspectives of LGBTQ+ activists during the evaluation.

In respect to women rights, OHCHR had taken care to integrate gender perspectives in its own work re: law, policies, systems. It also supported the HRD network which stands out as a very promising initiative (but it is still very reliant on OHCHR). One weakness of OHCHR has been the limited capacity of its systems to disaggregating data, to support gender-sensitive decision-making.

Women/men equality; women rights

In many cases policies and programmes labelled as "gender" would be better described as women/men equality or as "women rights" ones. The two concepts of course largely complement and overlap. But looking at the specificities of these areas of work would help to better pinpoint gaps and areas of improvement.

Women/men equality

"Gender equality" has been a cross cutting concern amongst many initiatives. OHCHR ensured that policies and legislation would be checked through these lenses. There was also considerable direct work and training on "gender budgeting" - with government actors (at different levels), and with civil society and media representatives - also in partnership with other governmental institution, including the Equal Opportunity Commission. OHCHR had also advocated for women/men balance in state institutions, including the Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights.

As observed above, however, it is incorrect to refer to "gender equality" if the work only expressly targets some aspects of gender. Work on "gender equality" should also incorporate:

- **age concerns**: UN definitions of "gender equality" explicitly mentions girls/boys. We could not check to what extent the age component is usually factored within "gender equality" and within budgeting mechanisms. But it was never made explicit, by any actor. Making policies and legislation age (and youth) responsive would help to reduce discrimination of a major group that often ends being side lined.
- **LGBTQ+** dimensions: all that refers to gender should never foster "binarysm" women-men. If sensitivities of the contexts do not allow to explicitly accommodate LGBTQ+ rights and perspectives, it would be better to refrain talking of "gender", and more correctly refer to women/men.

Within OHCHR work, however, we found it hard to highlight gender equality components in a wider sense - unless initiatives were explicitly directed to women. The narrative failed to incorporate gender-specific outcomes, challenges, achievements: it had tended to be mono-dimensional, issue focused.

Women rights work

Women rights work emphasizes action for protection and empowerment of women, in a country that has still policy gaps in this area. OHCHR has had a role, as emphasized, to support progress in policy and plans and engaged in substantial actions on the ground, including through its field offices. But we felt that an overall strategy for action on women rights was missing. We are also unclear of the current collaboration with UN-Women – or with the whole UN country team - in setting it (one limitation of the evaluation was not to meet representatives of other UN organizations specifically working on gender / women related issues). Our assessment therefore has been piecemeal. The following highlights topics we encountered pointing to issues of strategic importance.

- **Work with women activists**. OHCHR contributed to the setup of a Women HRD network. First with research assessing the Women HRD situation, and then with concrete support to enact the recommendations of the assessment. Some international observers wondered if it would had been more useful to have women rights sub-groups within other existing HRDs networks, to avoid fragmenting civil society. We understood, however, that

the network was born as a reaction to the insufficient capacity and sensitivity of existing HRDs networks to address women rights issues - and very concrete examples were provided to substantiate this claim. The fight for rights, "from within" risked to become an energy consuming internal battle. The Women HRD network has clearly opened a very needed space to highlight unique women challenges: contentious in nature, and very needed. As a Women HRD put it: "*other organizations ask women to work and engage, but they then do not shield them!*" OHCHR appears to be supporting an initiative which plays to its comparative advantages. The challenge is that it is still very fragile - precisely because not many other organizations might fill this niche.

● **Access to formal Justice for survivors of violence.** OHCHR is currently supporting a strategic litigation case on sexual violence during the conflict in north Uganda - together with FIDA - the association of women lawyers. Judiciary action built on psychosocial work, bringing survivors together, for sharing and healing. The work is ongoing and will need to be watched and monitored closely, for learning. A risk-reduction component needs also to be built in. An analysis on risk of retaliation was conducted, but it is unclear if provisions to manage a negative outcome- impacting the confidence and attitudes of the people involved- have been looked into. We encountered different views on this. It is important that OHCHR operates through diverse forms of justice re: human rights. The added value of OHCHR, at the strategic level - given its exposure to a full spectrum of issues and actors - lies precisely in looking at integration and complementarities of alternative form of justice – traditional and current ones. Which (or what combination) works best, when? For which women? Questions that do not yet seem to be addressed strategically.

Gender: an organizational perspective

The evaluation did not perform a full organizational analysis, but a few points on gender issues at the organizational level emerged which would require attention.

● **Capacity of the PMS and the Uganda Office's own management system to incorporate and track gender related issues.** Gender is embedded as a crosscutting topic in OHCHR plans, in the vast majority of the outcomes. It also cuts across pillars. It is especially prominent in the Civic space pillar (Women HRDs network, gender approach to media); the economic sphere pillar (mainstreaming gender across all sectors of the National Development Plan II and UN system procedures) and the non-discrimination pillar (explicitly included in the outcome, mainstreamed strategically through the Parliament gender and equity cross checking requirements, included in the HR compliance checklist for legislation). Note that gender, within OHCHR planning, largely means "women". A gender perspective is then lacking in the reporting phase, making it hard to acknowledge processes. Causes are the aforementioned lack of strategic approach to gender and women rights (mainstreaming then leads to dispersion) and weaknesses in capacity to follow up "downstream" changes. This is a loss, as OHCHR has specificities on gender /women rights worth to capture, share, disseminate, advocate for. A stronger gender perspective within M&E might help to pinpoint better strategic achievements.

● **Disaggregation of data / gender analysis**. The emphasis on gender in planning is not matched by a strong gender data collection and analysis. Even when data are disaggregated, there is no evidence of analysis looking at gender dynamics (no specific assessment and/or implementation to correct inequalities applying positive discrimination approaches). Gender analysis - stemming from evidence - has not informed decision-making processes. As evaluators, we felt it challenging to assess results with gender lenses: evidence was lacking, and this perspective was missing in the narrative (unless activities were specifically directed at women). The PMS output narrative also does not allow for a comprehensive breakdown of the information according to gender (including the whole array of gender categories) or to women-men accountability purposes (including reference to the numbers and percentages of overall women, or women associations targeted by the interventions - as now captured re: trainings). This handicap is reflected at the outcome level: none of the indicators proposed

makes explicit reference to gender apart from outcome 6 (under OHCHR's non-discrimination pillar).

- **Adaptiveness to women needs:** measures to support women participants in events (e.g. nannies) were in place. More comprehensive "women-enabling" measures - considering further factors (e.g.: dates, times, locations, attendees, etc.) might further support participation.
- **Gender budgeting.** The office is not applying gender budgeting principles. No specific assessment, planning and follow up is done. Budget wise, 10% of the budget has been spotted as directly targeted at women - though the office has not currently the system in place to properly plan or follow up on this expenses.

Field teams not balanced. In Kampala and Gulu staffing was gender balanced, not so in Moroto. This is problematic, as it obviously reduces the potential for engagement with women

Conclusions and recommendations

Overview

The feedback we received throughout the evaluation, from diverse stakeholders, was that they valued the presence of OHCHR. All stakeholders met agreed that the presence of OHCR has been beneficial for them and for their engagement towards human rights. They could always provide practical and meaningful examples of this. Activities were many and diverse - and even too many and too diverse, many observed, at the risk to lose strategic focus. But it is also easy to understand why: Uganda transitioned from response to conflict - which is much more narrowly focused - to a broader, developmental mandate. There were suddenly many more issues to address and little guidance in doing so - as the Uganda setup was quite a novelty from traditional OHCHR engagements.

Evaluation criteria

Relevance.

The programme has been relevant for all the actors involved. OHCHR had undoubtedly helped to strengthen national instruments for rights, integrating also HRBA and SDGs. It had engaged with many diverse stakeholders, with different intensity (for example, judiciary, media were overall little supported as compared with other actors). Could the programme have been more relevant? And did it manage to pinpoint what groups, rights, vulnerabilities require most attention? It is a hard to answer these questions, also because it cannot be backed by a strong assessment of human rights in country. OHCHR relies on several information sources, but with an overall weak process of aggregation for priority setting. To improve modalities for assessment, OHCHR should, on the one side, strengthen its capacity to consolidate findings. On the other, it should retain flexibility, and capacity to identify new opportunities and challenges. OHCHR has certainly focused on worthwhile issues, it demonstrated adaptiveness and managed to identify marginalized groups requiring attention and support (e.g. persons living with albinisms, women HRDs), but it still lacks tools for power analysis and for analysis on vulnerabilities accounting for multiple factors (i.e. beyond the standard generalizations). OHCHR should have done more to engage with youth. Finally, despite OHCHR having very clear and distinctive advantages - which have been positively acknowledged - there was not a clear strategic process leading to reveal and exercise such strengths.

Effectiveness

Exploring achievement of outcomes, as presented within end of year reports, have been challenging (due to the need to aggregate different processes and subjectivities in assessing results). This chapter focused on some cross-cutting areas within effectiveness: partnerships, approaches for engagement (in particular, capacity building), communication.

Partnership building had been an important cross-cutting activity across all programmes. We outlined partnerships and relations with key actors: UHRC, JLOs, civil society, UN, customary actors. Overall partnership building helped to strengthen capacities, collaboratively. OHCHR mission in country was largely - as management put it - to make sure that "those who should take action on rights are strong enough to do so": there was clear orientation to empowerment. The office learned, along time, how to facilitate and support - rather than substitute - capacity building processes - with all actors. We were happy to see that key engagements - for example the ones with police forces and UHRC - were highly valued by the actors we met. We identified areas for investment, in particular the connection with the UN and with traditional governance. It is also important to emphasize the importance of the convening role of OHCHR, in creating and supporting platforms for action.

Capacity building emerged as the preponderant avenue for engagement. It has been a major area of investigation, and revealed many, diverse outcomes. The evaluation looked in depth at a major activity within it - training - emphasizing 1) the need to complement it with other approaches; 2) the need for stronger assessment of capacities, leading not only to one-way capacity building, but also to shared learning practices and 3) the importance of upscaling and disseminating the capacity created. This section

systematized many detailed insights that can provide a very practical guidance to future action, based on past experience.

Communication. Communication is understood as a broader sense than reporting / engagement with media. It looks at the processes through which information is shared amongst stakeholders. Communication has been a weak area of the country office: it lacks specific expertise and resources and invested consistently little on engagement with media. Engagement has been mostly limited to media trainings, well received by participants. They shifted perceptions and reporting styles. Looking at "communication for outreach" revealed a currently weak capacity to spread out HR messages to reach the broader community. Outreach is emphasized as a critical endeavour to get the critical mass needed to ensure that human rights are owned collectively. Major shifts will be needed in the current communication style - to make it more oriented to broader audiences than the technical specialist - if the organization wants to embrace this challenge. But it is a challenge that need to be taken! Communication is the lifeblood of deeper learning. And also, of that breed of accountability which brings together rights holders and duty bearers in checking their commitments and their mutual responsibilities on human rights. This is an essential component of HRBA. We have been quite surprised that the idea of "downward accountability" (i.e. accountability to citizens") has been overall little emphasized by OHCHR in Uganda. Strengthening communication options (with also an outlook to innovative practices of open data sharing, use of social media) might well go hand in hand with deeper work in gauging the impact of human rights and in making all actors accountable to it.

Efficiency

According to the core standards assessed, the efficiency at the CO Uganda has some strong features specially related to the operational management aspects (sound financial mechanisms that allow good financial control) and good foundations for financial management (with the PMS distribution of the budget broken down per type of activities). On the other end, some of the operational management features have weaknesses regarding office efficiency (procurement and human resources processes are not adapted to the circumstances of the office or the country, scarce access to market prices, etc.). Also, the office has some weaknesses on the overall cost-effectiveness (the human resources structure does not match the needs of the office and no strong benchmarking on this area is happening with other UN agencies) and the implementation of result based budgeting (no sound incorporation of relevant financial information on financial decision making processes). Some key messages include:

● processes (adaptation to context and circumstances):financial processes although improved in the last year are still mentioned as a big hinder and annoyance by stakeholders. The bearing of it is significant and risks to overshadow good work with resentment and annoyance.
● human resources: several factors shall be looked at (structure, contract practices, etc.) to match human resources to the needs of the office.
● Financial decision making: financial data is essential. Collecting it and using it. There are several assessments that can be done in the office (financial implementation rate, social value, distribution of budget per type of targets, etc.) that are to be incorporated and that shall influence decision making.

Impact orientation

The chapter on impact highlights that there is not enough evidence to understand if - and to what extent - the programme is making a significant contribution to the broad and long term enjoyment of rights. And that this is not just a problem of "lack of evidence"; but a structural challenge. Impact level results - by the very nature of the logical chain hierarchy are often far too broad, and long term - to be realistically appreciated. They call for an orientation towards theory of change approaches and/or stronger strategies which are emerging in the programme, but not yet appropriated. Strategic planning also helps stronger appreciation of impact, but this evaluation - as previous ones - revealed that it is still weak (limited improvement on strategic planning is of course understandable, at a time when the status of OHCHR in the country was so uncertain).

A main assumption to counter will be that "change upstream" shall automatically lead to changes in rights. OHCHR staff is aware of the need to look at effects down the chain, but there are currently no processes to follow up on this. In practice, OHCHR can gauge if new laws, mechanisms are in place -as well as their quality. But it has little tools to understand if and to what extent they are really applied and transforming the life of people. Options for a way forward have been suggested (e.g. joint monitoring,

accountability measures, pilots of pre-institutionalization processes). As a proxy to gauge impact we outlined current achievements regarding HRBA key benefits . OHCHR had substantially contributed to some aspects of it (e.g. promotion of human rights and of rights instruments, creating the ground for sustained impact), but less so in others (ensuring transparency, creating a strong accountability ecosystem).

Sustainability

Some of the changes achieved by the programmes are structural (integrated in laws, plans of the country). There have been also investments in systems with a strong potential, but whose uptake and sustainability are still not clear (for example, database for recommendations, human rights checklists). There have been also improvements in capacities and with good evidence of appropriation and use. Much of the work done by OHCHR speaks to sustainability, but the programme itself has no set procedures to check the maturity of its achievements. It was also evident, when discussing models for action, that forward-looking questions have been little asked (e.g. handover, uptake, scalability). Sustainability also calls for phasing out of what can be already sustained: a practice insufficiently put in place so far, stretching partnerships. The non-renewable mandate requesting an exit strategy that, whatever will be the outcome, has been an opportunity to drive to handover where needed. The exit strategy, however, should be revised, as it has many loose ends. Even if duly completed, it will not sufficiently ensure that progresses will be sustained.

The chapter emphasized the importance to link sustainability to risk-management: ensuring that resilience of the human rights system is strengthened - in the face of threats. There are some elements of it in the programme, e.g. embryonal - not yet very visible - engagement in preparedness. But risk-management perspectives are not strategically integrated in the programme. Yet they neatly fall in the niche of OHCHR and would be key if OHCHR commits to the "triple nexus" at national scale.

Gender equality

Existing definitions of gender and gender equality within the UN encourage binarism (i.e. it is reduced to a men vs women issue). A binary orientation is quite problematic, for a concept born to ensure that different orientations are acknowledged (it makes, for example, LGBTQ+ rights invisible). It is therefore very positive that OHCHR in Uganda has been capable to raise awareness of non-binary aspects of gender issues, and with the sensitivity required in context.
In respect to women rights, OHCHR had taken care to integrate gender perspectives in its own work re: law, policies, systems. It also supported the HRD network which stands out as a very promising initiative (but it is still very reliant on OHCHR). One weakness of OHCHR has been the limited capacity of its systems to disaggregating data, to support gender-sensitive decision-making.

Lessons learned

The evaluation identified a wealth of lessons learned. The ones presented below have been chosen as the most relevant and replicable:

- **Results based management, alone, does not allow to capture the full impact of the programme and to effectively harvest and share practices.** OHCHR has acknowledged the importance of "theory of change approaches" in its recent global operational plan. A system oriented approach to planning and management should be promoted, with an appreciation of **complexity paradigms, and of the relevance of *processes* of change and of adaptive dynamics**.
- **Ensuring OHCHR's continued presence in post-conflict situations can make a difference for local actors, in several necessary areas of engagement.** This includes identifying emerging issues through an assessment of post-crisis challenges, monitor towards reconciliation, and support on addressing/coping with long-term trauma.

- **Supporting coordination mechanisms for local actors in human rights issues in a post-crisis setup provides needed platforms, leading to practical action on rights.** Such mechanisms do not need to be created ex-novo, but might evolve existing setups, as such as cluster coordination.
- **The strategy of a field presence should be continuously reassessed to maintain its relevance.** The current field presence is a legacy of the initial mandate of OHCHR. The evaluation noticed that a field presence, when not reassessed strategically and the findings of such reassessment adequately communicated, might see its relevance affected. Clarity of strategic purpose for the field presence, linked to a strong acknowledgement of local context and capacities, is key.

Recommendations

There has been strong and positive acknowledgement of the value of the collaboration in Uganda. OHCHR should continue to build on this with clear strategies. Strengthening its collaboration with local stakeholders would place OHCHR as the linchpin of the **triple nexus between humanitarian, development and peace actors** and the **mainstreaming of human rights-based approaches across UN agencies.**

For OHCHR in Uganda

Conclusion: The current investment in communication of its work in the Uganda Country Office is insufficient, and OHCHR is already aware of the need for an increased focus on communication. OHCHR has the possibility to strengthen communications about its programmes for greater accountability towards citizens.

Recommendation 1:
OHCHR Uganda should improve its capacity for communication through:–*(i) Undertaking stronger engagement with traditional media, while at the same time making use of innovative options for communication, such as the use of new communication formats and platforms; (ii) Firmly integrating communication in technical assistance programmes for ensuring transparency and accountability towards citizens, in particularly the most marginalized ones).*

Conclusion: The predominant focus of the Uganda Country Programme so far has been on supporting the establishment of national instruments (policies and frameworks) on human rights issues. The evaluation identified a gap in terms of mechanisms for accountability towards citizens in the context of these instruments.

Recommendation 2:
The Office should strengthen its support to national actors in establishing accountability practices in the context of national human rights instruments and frameworks (in particular for the most marginalized groups).
This includes:

(i) ***Support the creation of accountability ecosystems (including civil society, citizens, traditional leaders) to better track and communicate*** *progress in implementation of national human rights instruments and frameworks - including through sharing of achievements and creation of spaces for discussion.*

(ii) ***Leading by example***: OHCHR should commit to ***continue improving its own communication and accountability with citizens, and clarifying its role and responsibilities***

Conclusion: Sustainability is at the core of the Uganda Country Programme. OHCHR has been working for rights to be structurally embedded in the policies and frameworks of national institutions. It has strengthened capacities to sustain its work on human rights issues through investing in systems and skills. Sustainability might further benefit from investment in risk management to anticipate potential risks to human rights, in particular for the most vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Recommendation 3:
The future orientation of the Uganda Country Programme should be strengthened through systematic identification of opportunities and through better risk management.
Strategies and plans need stronger future orientation. This might include:
   (i)   Better exit or handover plans for specific initiatives;
   (ii) Identification of opportunities of engagement in emerging human rights issues and, in this context, clear modalities for upscale and uptake; and
   (iii) Stronger risk assessment and management. Elements of the risk management cycle (response, prevention, and mitigation) have already been incorporated within OHCHR Uganda's programme. These could be made more explicit and better integrated in a systematic, inclusive risk framework.

Conclusion: The Uganda Country Programme lacked capacity to capture and share its different models of intervention in support of human rights. Learning mechanisms –to make explicit, consolidate and share practices - were weak overall. This is a lost opportunity, as interesting practices emerged, which were worth sharing in the country and abroad. There is also a strong but unmet demand - by OHCHR staff - of learning from other OHCHR field presences.

Recommendation 4:
The Uganda Country Office should have a stronger focus on learning.
This includes:
   (i)   Identifying, documenting and disseminating successful models of intervention.
   (ii) Strengthening options for dissemination by exploring diverse possibilities, such as social media engagement, linkages with local umbrella organizations, peer dialogues and network creation.
   (iii) Engagement with participatory processes involving multiple stakeholders for learning and with a strong focus on communication for accountability, including at the regional level.

Conclusion: Technical assistance - and training in particular - has been a strong component of OHCHR Uganda's work. Participants highlighted that it has been useful and valued. However, they also noted very concrete options for improvement in light of the evolving context in the country. This includes recognizing that local actors are becoming more aware of rights issues and better equipped to address them.

Recommendation 5:
The Uganda Country Office should re-think its approach to capacity building activities.
This should take into account the following:

(i) Capacity building initiatives should be based on stronger existing capacity assessments of partners and stakeholders, and there should be a stronger investment in linking the results of these assessments to programming.

(ii) Training should evolve beyond traditional formats, to emphasize participation, including in design, setup and delivery with a focus on spreading learning developed in country and fostering experience sharing and peer capacity building to increase rootedness and relevance.

(iii) Integrating learning into programme design and implementation should be integral part of the future approach to capacity building.

Conclusion: The importance of strengthening regional engagement of the Uganda Country Office emerged, both for tackling root causes of (potential) violations and for devising options for resolution.

Recommendation 6:
The Uganda Country Office should strengthen the regional aspects of its work, with an emphasis on the use of regional instruments and support to regional stakeholders' networks for better coordination on common human rights concerns.

For OHCHR Headquarters (and Uganda Country Office):

Conclusion: Limitations in data management access and use of data have been evident throughout the evaluation. This concerns all aspects of the Country Office's work including needs assessments, monitoring activities, systematization of evidence, and disaggregation of data in terms of vulnerable groups.

Recommendation 1:
OHCHR Uganda should invest in stronger approaches to data management, access and use.
This should be done through:

(i) Supporting approaches promoting generation and use of "open data" (taking into account security and data protection issues to address the sensitivities of some types of information).

(ii) Including online platforms to make information available to stakeholders (e.g. when working with the government to ensure accountability, or supporting civil society initiatives for evidence-based advocacy).

Conclusion: Even though some of the problems may be mitigated by the new UN system wide rules, financial and procurement processes in the Uganda Country Office are not adapted to the context and needs of the office, and have caused several instances of friction, as pinpointed by stakeholders.

Recommendation 2:
OHCHR Uganda should adapt operational management in line with the nature of OHCHR's mandate.

> *(i)* *The Uganda office, through OHCHR headquarters, should look at ways to adapt and/or adopt more appropriate financial and operational systems that are more in line with the nature of OHCHR's mandate.*
>
> *(ii)* *It is therefore recommended that OHCHR Uganda shifts from a development cooperation procurement based rationale to a rationale entailing a swifter and more flexible modality of operation.*

Conclusion: Current practices in the Uganda Country Office demonstrate a lack of input of financial information into in decision-making processes, thus hindering evidence based financial decision-making.

Recommendation 3:
The Uganda Country Office should establish result-based management and budgeting principles (evidence based financial decisions).
> *(i)* *The PMS system should be upgraded to allow the aggregation of financial information at the output and outcome levels.*
>
> *(ii)* *Budget information at the activity level in the PMS should be categorised by assigning identifiers ("tagging") according to all relevant variables for decision-making (e.g. thematic areas, vulnerable groups, type of activities, etc.).*
>
> *(iii)* *PMS or another relevant system should include up to date financial information (e.g. monthly financial reports) showing up to date expenditure rates.*
>
> *(iv)* *Finally, financial data and input by colleagues working in finance should be an integral part of the programmatic decision-making process.*

Conclusion: Work on human rights requires a careful assessment of factors leading to discrimination. While OHCHR-Uganda has in the past identified specific categories and groups (e.g. people living with albinism, survivors of torture and violence against women) and tailored actions for them, the Office could play an even stronger role in identifying specific forms of exclusion that might go un-noticed.

Recommendation 4.
OHCHR Uganda should foster a truly inclusive approach in its Programme.
> *(i)* *OHCHR should continue to foster its capacity for multi-factor analysis of exclusion, and build this more strongly and consistently within its systems.*
>
> *(ii)* *This should involve a better use of evidence and disaggregated data, and an explanation of the diverse dimensions of discrimination that the office already bears in mind, but which are not systematically captured.*
>
> *(iii)* *Finally, OHCHR should continue to ensure that its use of 'gender' does not imply binarism and to raise awareness of the issue with other bodies.*

Conclusion: There is a lack of understanding of OHCHR's theory of change in the Uganda Office. Rather than working towards the Office's objectives in a holistic way, the Office is working towards the different pillar results of the country programme in an isolated manner with little attention to interlinkages between the different results to be achieved.

Recommendation 5:

OHCHR Uganda should ensure that OHCHR's theory of change is truly understood and owned by its staff.

(i) OHCHR should promote a strategic thinking culture in all its processes (planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation), by bringing together teams and topics so that OHCHR's theory of change is addressed in its whole rather than through individual pillars.

(ii) OHCHR should ensure that staff better understand, appreciate and use OHCHR's theory of change and roadmap (as stated in the OHCHR operational management plan).

(iii) Efforts should also be made to encourage communication of the theory of change to partners, to better align efforts.

Conclusion: As Uganda transitioned from crisis, there have been increasingly diverse perceptions regarding OHCHR's role and mandate. This has created friction with stakeholders, which in turn has had a major impact on the effectiveness of the Country Programme. The evolving role of OHCHR within the country has not always been clearly conveyed to or understood by local and international actors - including the UN - and this has considerably affected its actions.

Recommendation 6:

OHCHR should provide more clarity regarding the purpose of the Uganda Country Office and its mandate, and a strong, clear positioning of the Office should be ensured.

(i) OHCHR Uganda should invest in clarifying its role and added value through an internal reflection process and in repositioning itself accordingly.

(ii) OHCHR Uganda should position itself at the very centre of the UNDAF process. It should harness its added value as the UN agency supporting the Universal Periodic Reviews and international treaty bodies, the recommendations of which should form the entire development agenda.

(iii) Such a focus would ensure that the Uganda Office can play a role coherent with its area of strengths regarding the triple nexus (the nexus between humanitarian, development, and peace). This includes its convening power within and beyond the United Nations, recognized expertise in human rights issues, and the capacity to appreciate rights in their entirety.