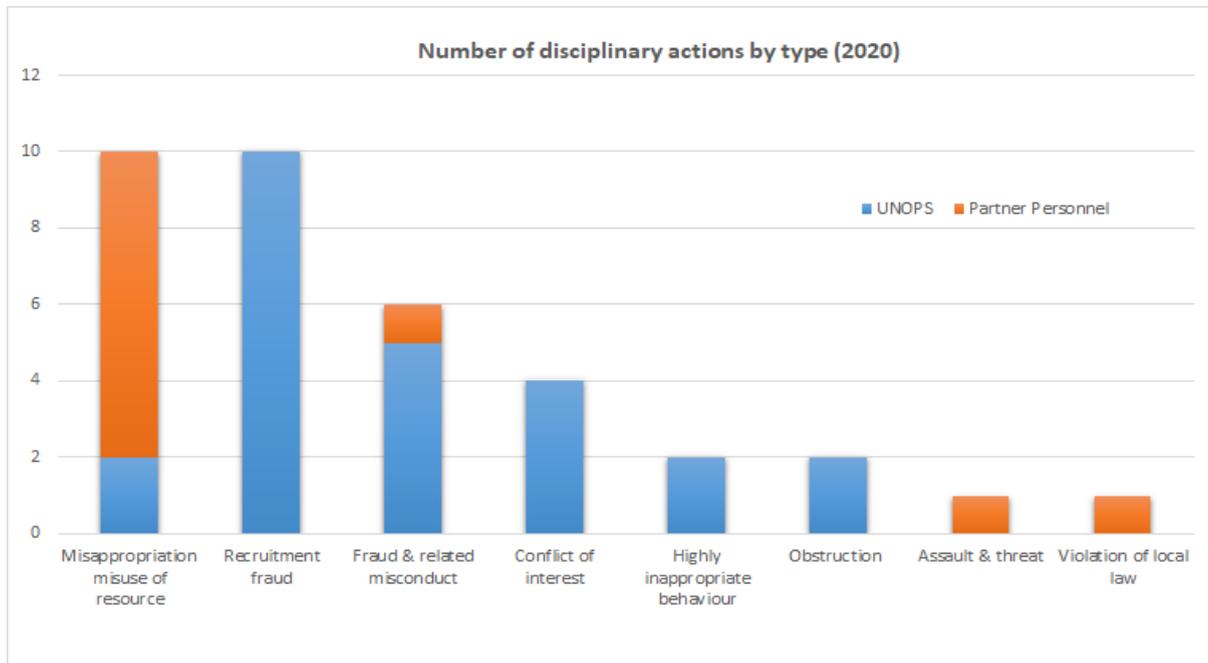


Executive Director’s report of cases of misconduct that resulted in the imposition of disciplinary and administrative measures in 2020

Summary

1. In 2020, UNOPS took administrative and disciplinary action against 36 personnel, of whom 11 were working operationally for other UN offices on UNOPS contracts. Of these 36 individuals, 24 had their contracts terminated, three were censured and one individual was demoted. Eight individuals were no longer with UNOPS by the disciplinary stage. As a result, UNOPS placed notes in their files. The number of administrative and disciplinary actions has increased by 44 per cent in comparison with the prior year, largely because two separate groups of personnel conspired to commit fraud in two duty stations.¹
2. UNOPS referred two cases (involving seven of the 36 UNOPS personnel) to national authorities for criminal investigation. Where UNOPS personnel have been working operationally for other UN offices under UNOPS contracts, UNOPS has informed those offices about the misconduct committed by their managed personnel.
3. In sum, 56 per cent of the disciplinary actions pertained to fraud, misappropriation and related misconduct, 28 per cent to recruitment fraud, 6 per cent to highly inappropriate behaviour, 3 per cent to assault, and the remaining 7 per cent pertained to other violations.
4. These cases caused a financial loss of \$174,550 to UNOPS. UNOPS has recovered \$38,105 and is seeking to recover the remaining amounts.



Disciplinary and administrative measures in 2020

I. Fraud and related misconduct: six people

5. A personnel member failed to pay a debt to a vendor and provided falsified documents to UNOPS to support their claim that their debt had been settled. UNOPS placed a note in the

¹ (a) In one duty station, six personnel were part of a large-scale fuel fraud scheme, and (b) in another duty station, ten personnel conspired to commit recruitment fraud and financially defrauded UNOPS through the inflation of working hours.

personnel member's file stating that they would have been charged with misconduct if they had not separated for other reasons.

6. A personnel member forged their supervisor's signature on three monthly certificates of payment. UNOPS placed a note in the personnel member's file stating that they would have been charged with misconduct had they not separated for other reasons.
7. A personnel member failed to attend a training, for which they received DSA, and falsified attendance records for the same. UNOPS terminated the personnel member's contract. UNOPS also recovered the DSA of \$278.
8. A personnel member falsely stated that they had verified the authenticity of a request to change a supplier's bank account, resulting in a financial loss to UNOPS. UNOPS terminated the personnel member's contract on grounds of gross negligence. UNOPS recovered \$5,200 from the personnel member and is seeking to recover the remaining \$132,699 from the individual. UNOPS also referred the matter to national authorities.
9. A personnel member, who worked operationally for another UN entity, submitted two fraudulent medical insurance claims to a medical provider. UNOPS placed a note in the personnel member's file stating that their contract would have been terminated had they not already separated from UNOPS.
10. Prior to joining UNOPS, a personnel member worked at another UN entity, where they colluded with a vendor to submit false letters purportedly from a bank. There was no financial loss to the UN. UNOPS terminated the personnel member's contract.

II. Misappropriation and misuse of office property and information: ten people

11. A personnel member, who worked operationally for another UN entity, attempted to steal UN property. There was no financial loss to the UN. UNOPS terminated the personnel member's contract.
12. Six personnel members, who worked operationally for another UN entity, defrauded the UN by falsely inflating fuel prices as part of a large-scale fuel fraud scheme. UNOPS terminated the six personnel members' contracts and referred the individuals to the national authorities. UNOPS has recovered \$10,007 from these individuals and is seeking to recover the remaining \$2,046.
13. A personnel member failed to report and to pay back a salary overpayment to their account. UNOPS placed a note in the personnel member's file stating that they would have been charged with misconduct had they not separated for other reasons. UNOPS has recovered the overpayment of \$22,620.
14. A personnel member working operationally for another UN entity stole and cashed salary cheques made out to other colleagues. UNOPS placed a note in the personnel member's file stating that their contract would have been terminated had they not separated for other reasons. UNOPS is seeking to recover approximately \$1,700.
15. A personnel member improperly used their computer system privileges to access sensitive UNOPS information for personal reasons. UNOPS terminated the personnel member's contract.

III. Conflict of interest: four people

16. A personnel member (retainer) agreed to be included in a vendor's proposal for services to UNOPS. UNOPS placed a note in the personnel member's file for consideration before any future employment with UNOPS.
17. A personnel member participated in outside activities after being denied permission by UNOPS to do so. The personnel member provided evidence of mitigating circumstances. UNOPS therefore placed a written censure in their file.
18. A personnel member helped two vendors prepare their bids for a UNOPS tender. The personnel member and the vendors failed to disclose this conflict of interest. UNOPS terminated the personnel member's contract.
19. A personnel member failed to declare a conflict of interest and committed procurement fraud by managing a vendor while working for UNOPS. The vendor was awarded six UNOPS contracts and the personnel member was involved in most of these procurements. UNOPS terminated the personnel member's contract.

IV. Recruitment fraud: ten people

20. Ten personnel members conspired to commit recruitment fraud and financially defrauded UNOPS via the inflation of working hours. UNOPS terminated nine personnel members' contracts, and placed a note in one personnel member's file stating that their contract would have been terminated had they not separated for other reasons.

V. Highly inappropriate behaviour: two people

21. A personnel member touched a colleague inappropriately and without the colleague's consent, during a social event on office premises outside of core hours. Using a victim-centred approach (ensuring that the victim's wishes and wellbeing are prioritized), UNOPS issued a written censure.
22. A staff member made a joke with sexual connotations about a colleague. The staff member was censured and fined on disciplinary grounds. The staff member and UNOPS agreed that the fine would be in the form of a donation to a charity supporting the protection of women.

VI. Assault/threat: one person

23. A personnel member, who worked operationally for another UN entity, physically assaulted a UN employee. UNOPS terminated the personnel member's contract.

VII. Violation of local law: one person

24. A personnel member, who worked operationally for another UN entity as a driver, drove a UN vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. UNOPS terminated the personnel member's contract.

VIII. Obstruction to investigation: two people

25. A personnel member discussed a UNOPS investigation with a representative of a vendor that was under the same investigation. UNOPS placed a note in their file stating that they would have received a written censure and been required to undertake additional procurement and conflict of interest training had they not separated for other reasons.
26. A personnel member provided false statements during an investigation thereby obstructing the investigation into recruitment fraud. The personnel member's contract was reduced by two substeps.