CEB/2021/HLCM/10/Add.3

CEB
Chief Executives Board
for Coordination

High-level Committee on Management (HLCM)

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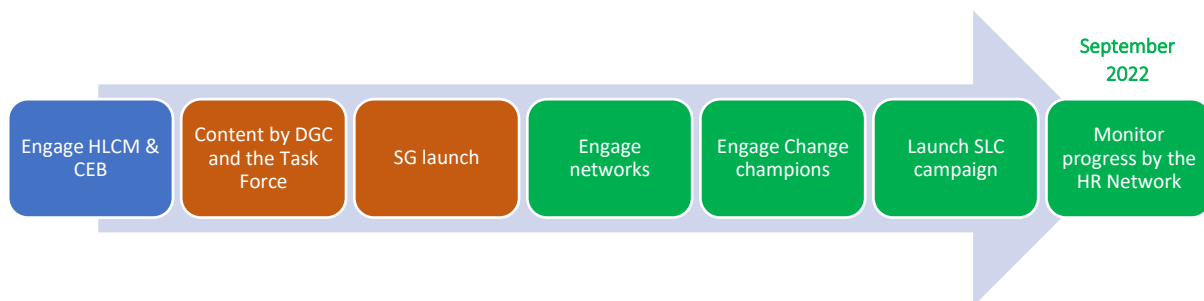
Virtual Session

<u>Implementation plan for operationalizing the Senior Leadership Commitments</u>

**Engagement plan for the dissemination of
the Senior Leadership Commitments**

1. Introduction

- The Senior Leadership Commitments (SLCs), developed by the HLCM Task Force on the Future of Work, aim to help prepare senior UN leaders to steer the transition of their organizations and workforce towards the future of work. Following the endorsement of the SLCs by the HLCM, the next step is to socialize them across the UN system so that senior leaders can endorse them and role-model them in their daily interaction with their teams.

- The document aims to provide initial ideas to the HLCM, the Task Force and UN entities to successfully disseminate the SLCs and garner support for their implementation.

- The document recommends a number of actions and activities to kick off the process and ensure the sustainability of the initiative at different levels of the UN system: the Task Force and the HLCM; the UN Secretary General (UNSG) and his Office; the UN Secretariat; UN entities. **The official endorsement of the UNSG would ensure buy-in, visibility and sustainability of the initiative**. It also recommends to UN entities to mobilize a few change champions and potentially other networks, employee affinity groups (e.g. networks on gender, Young UN, UN-GLOBE) to help disseminate and socialize the SLCs.

2. Sequencing

September
2022

| Engage HLCM & CEB | Content by DGC and the Task Force | SG launch | Engage networks | Engage Change champions | Launch SLC campaign | Monitor progress by the HR Network |

Responsibilities

🔵 *Task Force*

🟠 *UN Secretariat*

🟢 *All UN entities, including UN Secretariat*

3. Guidelines / Overall approach

3.1 Key messages

Below are some examples of messages that UN entities, change champions and senior leaders are encouraged to use and adjust to their own communication needs and awareness-raising activities:

- United by the highest standards of the international civil service and the UN Secretary-General's call for "principled and visionary UN leadership," the CEB Task Force on the Future of the United Nations System Workforce has identified five critical Senior Leadership Commitments (SLCs) that have been developed to help prepare UN leaders to steer the transition of their organizations and workforce towards the future of work.

- These commitments call on all of the UN's senior leaders to make a commitment to lead differently, as they steer the UN towards becoming a more people-centric, values-based organization that delivers on its global mandate even more effectively.

- The SLCs build on the UN System Leadership Framework and incorporate the lessons that have been learned from the COVID-19 crisis, as well as the challenges that need to be addressed by entities.

- Commitments:
  - Fostering employee engagement and inclusion by putting people first.
  - Recognizing learning and development as a fundamental and continuous necessity.
  - Embracing new leadership and organizational models that encourage greater collaboration.
  - Cultivating a culture of authenticity, participation, and transparency.
  - Nurturing the passion and change needed for excellence.

- The SLCs are an opportunity and a necessity to prepare the UN entities and the workforce for the future of work and new ways of working.

- The SLCs help building a working environment where everyone thrives, no matter who they are or where they serve, and are treated with respect and dignity.

- By embracing the SLCs, UN senior leaders will embody some of the most critical changes required to deliver on the mandate of the United Nations and to help deliver Our Common Agenda, leading by example in a world where the parameters are shifting rapidly.

- By role modelling the SLCs, senior leaders will foster new ways of working and help make the UN system a highly relevant and attractive global workplace in the 21st century.

- The SLCs align expectations on behaviours and management styles across UN entities, in line with the ICSC Standards of Conduct and UN values.

3.2 Communication style

While it is up to the discretion of each UN entity on how to adopt and disseminate the SLCs, they are encouraged to use the following guidance:

- **Common system-wide identity**: Promoting the SLCs is a collective effort of the entire CEB. All entities are encouraged to recognize the interagency nature of this initiative in the communication products they will develop.

- **Language and tone of voice**: The tone of voice will be positive and people-centric, using "I" ("e.g., I commit to...") to the extent possible.

- **Inclusion and diversity:** In view of their global nature, it is important that the SLCs reflect the diversity of languages used in the UN and be inclusive. The use of captions in videos, sign language interpretation and translations is encouraged in communications pieces and events.

- **Consistent and jargon free**: The SLCs is a global initiative of importance to the entire workforce of the UN system. In that sense, communication materials developed should be jargon-free to secure understanding by the workforce at large.

3.3 Timeline

UN entities are requested to report by September 2022 to the DMSPC through their Focal Points on activities implemented to socialize and roll out the SLCs internally so that the HLCM can review their implementation at its Autumn 2022 session.

3.4 Resources

This initiative relies on the collective engagement of UN entities to prepare the UN system and its leaders to the transition to the future of work.

The development of a common branding, communications strategy and roll-out of the SLCs would require specific funding to get external resources to support this initiative and notably to help produce and organize the digital content. While the materials would be made available free of charge to UN entities, benefitting UN entities would bear the cost of their production, translation, adaptation etc.

4. Suggestions for the dissemination of the Senior Leadership Commitments

4.1 To the Task Force

- For the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Task Force: To approach the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) asking for his personal involvement to give weight to the initiative.
- For a few members of the Task Force and/or the HLCM: to do bite-size video interviews on how they live the SLCs, for onward distribution to UN entities as samples of awareness raising materials they could use.

4.2 To the UN Secretariat

- Department of Global Communications (DGC), with the support of EOSG, DMSPC, and the Task Force, to co-create a set of core communication materials to ensure common branding to the initiative and a multi-year plan to engage UN Principals through regular updates and first-hand stories. This could include a patchwork of bite-size video interviews of senior leaders across the UN system on how they live the SLCs on a daily basis. C.f. video about the UN innovation network (UNIN).

- UNSG, or the Deputy UNSG, to officially launch the SLCs in order to push the integration of the SLCs into UN entities. This could include:

  o UNSG sends a message to Heads of UN entities launching the SLCs in the framework of the 'future of work' and emphasizing the importance of role-modelling and requests each

UN entity to launch the framework in their organizations and to collaborate through the HR Network on mainstreaming this as part of our organizational culture.

o The Task Force and the HR Network with the support of the Department of Global Communications, launches a pledge campaign à la 'heforshe' (sign and photo op'), subject to the raising of the appropriate voluntary contributions for the campaign.

o The UNSG does a bite-size video interview on how he lives the SLCs on a daily basis.

• Consider including a new "Future of Work" category for the UNSG Awards in 2022.

• Include a topic of a future Leadership Dialogue, perhaps in combination with the new competencies.

• Connect to formal and informal Networks to increase visibility and socialize SLCs bottom-up, such as clinics, use network events – providing good communication packages to help dissemination.

4.3 To all UN entities, including the UN Secretariat

• To take advantage of corporate events such as UN international days, learning and leadership initiatives and other high-level gatherings to promote the SLCs and boost the endorsement campaign. Examples include:

o The Global Resident Coordinators Meeting (November 2021)
o Regional Management Team and Country Management Team meetings
o Global/Regional Representatives/Heads of mission meetings.
o Appointment or renewal of Head of UN entities to their positions.
o Learning Managers fora; Change Managers fora; HR Network; Young UN; Gender focal points etc.

• To include a reference to the SLCs in any related document or statement made by CEB principals and senior leaders.

• To identify among its workforce a few change champions who "walk the talk" and are eager to promote the SLCs within their own entity (see section below on the change champions) and involve them in activities and events where to promote the SLCs.

• To create a few bite-size video interviews of senior leaders and staff in the field and HQ to raise awareness about the SLCs among senior leaders and the workforce.

• To take into account ideas and materials developed by the Task Force (SLCs animated video; sample SLCs Power Point presentation; sample bite-size video interviews of senior leaders) and by the Department of Global Communications for the development of their pledge campaign with the appropriate voluntary contributions.

5. Proposal for the Future of Work Change Champions

Below we suggest a way forward for UN entities to a) operationalize a change champions network and b) dedicate a central resource to build and sustain implementation momentum as well as facilitate experience sharing.[1]

The approach suggested will help UN entities contextualize the SLCs to their specific operational context, organisational culture, and mandate.

5.1 Change champions

- Each participating UN entity will identify an initial group of minimum three change champions per UN entity; one change champion should be from senior leadership; one from middle leadership and one being in a non-managerial position.

- UN entities will have full discretion in nominating three or more change champions and the extent to which they dedicate time to facilitate implementation[2]

- The initial group of change champions will be endorsed by the respective Heads. Subsequent groups are self-appointed by the predecessor(s).

- Change champions will receive public acknowledgement (e.g. letter of appreciation of SG).

- Each trio of change champions will be appointed internally to ensure that activities and campaigns are relevant to the specific mandate and culture of the organisation.

- Once established the change champion trio will develop a 'live' action plan for 6-months with suggested activities. With a minimum of 6-months as change champions a trio should appoint three new change champions who may update and amend the action plan as new opportunities arise. UN entities may consider having one or more change champions with longer mandates to ensure consistency among change champion trios.

- A change champion trio appoints its successor with a view to optimize diversity; ensuring broad coverage of the participating entity and to identify new activities. cover under-exposed parts of the organization; implement 'opportunistic' action plan.

5.2 Change champion role

- Timebound (minimum 6 months).

- To raise organizational awareness through advocacy, activities, and engagement activities that are inclusive and promote the 'future of work'.

- Clarify scope and purpose of the entity specific change champions work with a focus on staff engagement; generation of ideas and solutions, awareness raising and supporting implementation of activities.

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[1] The suggestion is initially for a 1-year timebound allocation of minimum 50% resource from a sponsoring agency. Ideally, UNSSC would co-sponsor for the initial year to capitalize on synergies with UNLOCK.

[2] The suggestion is that each Champion is given 15% - 20% of their time for the 6-months period to build implementation momentum.

- To create a rolling action plan for the organization that cover a 6-months period that integrates 'ideas for the journey' as appropriate with due consideration of the three foundational principles from the SLC's[3].

- To implement activities that nudge the organization towards the 'future of work'.

- Link with the central resource to share planned actions, emerging good practices and participate in an informal change champions community.

5.3 Change champion profile

Early adopter of 'Future of Work' commitments and activities including but not limited to[4]:

- Has a "flexible" mindset and encourages change, inspires flexibility at all levels of the organization and understands innovation.

- Colleague who 'walks the talk' of future of work – delivers superior employee experience and high engagement across different organizational contexts.

- Is known for promoting diversity and inclusion.

- Supporter of continuous learning and a good communicator who builds relationships across organizational levels.

- Active in the field of piloting new and collaborative ways of flattening structures and engaging in open dialogue.

- Builds working environments that are trusting and characterised by psychological safety.

- Inspirational and well respected (360 degrees – peers, supervisors and supervisees alike).

- Encourages calculated risk-taking as a way of promoting advancement.

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[3] https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/2021.HLCM_.6.Add_.2.Rev_.1%20-%20Senior%20Leadership%20Commitments_0.pdf

[4] See also the UNLOCK case study for inspiration of what makes a good change agent: https://www.unssc.org/sites/unssc.org/files/u3/change_agent_networks_in_the_un_system_nov_2020_case_study_1.pdf

Annex - Change champions toolkit

The suggestions below are inspirational and meant to start the conversations within the appointed trio of change champions. Another good source of inspiration is the UNLOCK case study on change agents that can be found here.

Tool	Activity	Operationalize
Social Media Platforms (SMP)	Have a visible/regular online presence	• Regularly, communicate key messages related to the future nature of work
Brownbag lunches Webinars Social media Platforms Townhall meetings with the three change champions	Translate senior leaders' messages down to middle management and staff	• Embed messages in initiatives and programmes across the organisation, such as, leadership and management development programmes • Organize targeted discussions online through social media platforms • Post messages on social media networks • Organize townhall meetings with the presence of the three change champions
Targeted Discussions	Listen to all organizational levels through discussion groups across the organisation on the new nature of work.	• Meet with Departments/Divisions/Sectors as a guest speaker during staff meetings
Orientation/induction of newcomers	Participate in the (re)design of Orientation and Induction programmes as well as participate as a guest speaker	• Be part of the team (re)designing the programme • Be a guest speaker for newcomers
leadership and management development programs	Participate in the (re)design of Leadership and Management Development programmes as well as participate as a guest speaker	• Be part of the team (re)designing the programme • Be a guest speaker
Succession planning	Be part of the Senior Review Committee	• Provide input to the committee ensuring that future leaders embody the new nature of work and UN Values and can be catalysts of change.
Networking	Meet with change champions of other UN entities	• On a regular basis, meet with change champions of other UN entities to exchange ideas and best practices and adjust strategies
Build an internal network to future proof the entity for the future of work	Use the UNLOCK case study to set-up an internal network to help prepare the organization for the future of work	• Identify purpose and scope • Identify networkers • 'Lite many fires' i.e. start many small activities