Annex 2:
High Level Committee on Management (HLCM):
Working Group on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)
Sub-group on Vision and Principles

Our vision:

A United Nations System of Organizations that is fair, diverse and inclusive, where everyone belongs, is equal and valued.

Background

The principles laid out in this document are a guiding framework intended to support the realization of the shared vision, allowing each organization to adapt them to their respective mandate and operational context: While recognizing that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is aimed at transforming the UN system workforce and workplace, this vision cannot be achieved without a whole of system approach. This will require embedding these DEI principles into everything our organizations do, from programming to operations, and leveraging these efforts to generate transformative change towards justice, inclusion and belonging in the communities and societies we serve.

Proposed Principles:

- o Leave No One Behind
- o Intentional inclusion and dignity for all
- o Equitable representation
- o Intersectionality
- o Developmental approach to DEI
- o Evidence-based and ethically collected data
- o Leadership and accountability

1. Leave no one behind (LNOB)

As a foundational principle, the leave no one behind tenet supports a human rights-based approach to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). It is both central to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and it is the basis for addressing historical inequities.

Underpinning this principle are the following strategic approaches:

- Leveraging the LNOB principle means integrating an equity lens into DEI efforts. Equity is defined as fair distribution of resources and opportunities. Equity can be achieved by taking corrective measures such as targeted investments and policy change to ensure fairness and dignity for all.

The UN System's approach to DEI should therefore compel organizations to focus on the individuals and groups that have been (historically and systemically) excluded, marginalized and 'left behind'. Practically this includes an effort to correct past wrongs to ensure inclusion and belonging and increase meaningful representation of excluded and/or marginalized individuals and groups across the UN's workforce, at all levels in every organization.

- Ensuring no one is left behind requires a multi-pronged and long-term commitment. It also entails a process of identifying and removing structural and systemic barriers that are the root causes of exclusion.
- An LNOB approach to building organizational culture means creating a workplace environment that is predicated on empowerment. In an organizational setting this relates to environments which encourage a 'speak up' culture, foster 'upstander' (instead of 'bystander') behaviors, and a workplace where all personnel enjoy psychological safety and trust.
- Integrating LNOB begins with the workforce and the workplace, but it mustn't be confined to this domain. LNOB requires 'centering the margins' in everything we do, which means making prominent the excluded and marginalized viewpoints, voices, and knowledge production from across the United Nations – in all of its internal processes and culture, strategies, policies and in its work, programs, operations, partnerships, communications, and reports.

2. Intentional inclusion and dignity for all

Inclusion is broadly understood as the act of belonging (to a group or within a structure). Intentional inclusion means that deliberate action is undertaken to ensure that all personnel feel part of their organization and that their (unique) contributions and lived experiences are celebrated and valued. This requires that the dignity and worth of people as human beings is respected and in the acceptance and integration of the perspectives and experiences that each employee brings to the workplace.

Underpinning this principle are the following strategic approaches:

- Intentional inclusion goes beyond including those who are traditionally excluded and marginalized. It entails dismantling the many forms of bias that contribute to the persistent marginalization of groups based on arbitrary distinctions, including but not limited to age, disability, gender identity, ethnicity, cultural background and skin color. .
- Intentional inclusion necessitates a critical reflection of an organization's culture, as well as of the institutional systems, policies and practices that may lead to discrimination and exclusion, and subsequently undertaking the necessary reforms and actions to address and eliminate these barriers and gaps.
- Intentional inclusion requires concerted action, capacity building and specific measures to address the needs and perspectives of specific groups such as physical and digital accessibility for persons with disabilities or cultural and religious beliefs and practices.
- Intentional inclusion is about promoting dignity, respect and wellbeing and ensuring an inclusive and accessible environment. It requires a workplace that is free from harm, where personnel thrive and feel safe to contribute fully to results and can progress equitably.

3. Equitable representation

Equitable representation acknowledges that various forms of exclusion and marginalization that exist in society are also reflected in the UN system. It therefore calls for addressing historical and systemic inequities through representation and participation as an essential first step. This compels the UN System to do more to ensure non- and under-represented groups are engaged, recruited, invested in, and retained within the UN System. This will ensure that the UN System will better represent the populations it serves and reflects the multiple environments where it operates and, therefore, guarantee a more effective delivery of its mandate.

Underpinning this principle are the following strategic approaches:

- Equitable representation needs to be informed by both the organizational mandate and priorities and the global and local talent markets that supply the UN System with its workforce. Each UN System entity, based on their mandate, should aim to have a workforce that is more representative of the communities they serve and the localities where they operate. This requires an intentional analysis the workforce (over, under and non-represented groups), and subsequently the adoption of special measures to identify, nurture and retained this talent.
- This analysis could include elements such as nationality, sex/gender, as some entities are already doing, and, depending on local context, needs and feasibility, could also be expanded to include other identity measures. Additional identity metrics should include race and ethnic origin, gender expression, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, disability, caste, religion, indigenous and minority status, refugee status, migration, and the like. These should be tailored to the mission and mandate of each entity.
- Equity is about fairness. Without equitable representation in decision making, fair outcomes are harder to achieve. Thus, equitable representation should be a guiding approach to decision making forums and processes and should be integrated into all of the UN System's ways of working.

4. Intersectionality

Intersectionality puts people at the center of all actions and takes into account the *outcomes* of intersecting, interrelated and compounded forms of exclusion and marginalization. Intersectionality acknowledges that individuals hold multiple identities, and that identities-related inequality and oppression are not experienced separately but rather as a singular, synthesized experience.

Underpinning this principle are the following strategic approaches:

- Upholding the principles behind Intersectionality ensures that everyone in the United Nations System can bring their whole selves to work, and that the unique perspectives, skills and contributions born from the diverse experiences of specifically marginalized groups are valued. It means having the ability to capture personnel's truest expression of their own work-selves and to identify, nurture and reward people's contributions.
- Intersectionality values the whole of the person. It requires a comprehensive approach to diversity that goes beyond the numbers. It includes diversity of thought, which is based on personality, lived experience, etc., and thus a recognition of the diverse identities all individuals

hold. Demographic diversity and diversity of thought, for example, can greatly contribute to true diversity.

- Intersectional analysis of data can capture the multidimensional facets of personnel's identities and is the most effective form of diversity analytics. Intersectional outcomes can best be captured, especially in Human Resources systems of account such as workforce reports, self-declaration forms and employee surveys, by integrating intersectional data collection and analysis methods to measure the impact on each group. This means, at the very least, collecting two or more diversity dimensions (i.e., individual, and demographic information). For instance, collecting data on gender identity should include additional dimensions such as disability, racial and ethnic origin, or indigenous status to enable substantive intersectional analysis.

5. A Developmental approach to DEI

A developmental approach to DEI requires a growth mindset, which acknowledges that each one of us can learn to be more inclusive and adopt inclusive behaviors. At the institutional level, a growth mindset requires that organizations remain open to continuous improvement and transformation. It entails addressing both historical, contextual, and emergent challenges and removing structural, systemic barriers that prevent the full engagement of personnel, in support of creating diverse, equitable and inclusive organizations. In addressing historical and systemic obstacles, a comprehensive approach that seeks to undo the legacies of disparities and marginalization - including colonial, racial, gender and other disparities and the marginalization of certain identities, remains a central tenant.

Underpinning this principle are the following strategic approaches:

- Establish a culture of continuous learning, at every level and across all domains, to enhance the capacity and capabilities of the workforce on DEI related issues. For instance, creating open, safe and brave spaces for dialogue and reflection, establishing listening exercises for leadership and curating conversations; which include prominent thinkers and practitioners who are shaping the global landscape of DEI.
- A growth mindset requires learning from the past in order to transform the future. In the context of the United Nations System, this should incorporate a dedicated and explicit focus on 'decolonizing mindsets', which refers to the ways in which language, practices, systems, ways of working and culture are all influenced by a global history deeply rooted in colonialism, racial superiority as well as geographical, cultural and gender divides. Recognizing the centrality of decolonization, including but not limited to anti-racism to DEI in the UN System is central to the promotion of human rights and justice, and should be supported and promoted by leadership statements and institutional recognition.
- Provide adequate support and can counselling to marginalized groups and seek healing and reconciliation in acknowledging and understanding historical harms and oppression, to learn from them and to ensure that they do not continue to be perpetuated.

6. Evidence-based and ethically collected data

Progress in DEI requires that it is regularly monitored, and that adjustments are made to address bottlenecks. DEI data is essential to demonstrate impact, maintain organizational momentum and

increase buy-in. It is therefore important that these data are accurate, relevant and collected with due regard to ethical standards.

Underpinning this principle are the following strategic approaches:

- Diversity data should include demographic, racial and other identity related data to inform decision making and special measures to diversify the makeup of the workforce and address historical and current inequities. Inclusion and belonging data in general, serves the purpose of keeping track of organizational culture in an effort to shift it towards a more inclusive and non-discriminatory culture.
- DEI initiatives and decisions are based on ethically and safely collected and protected data that does not unduly expose or harm personnel, especially personnel from excluded and marginalized groups. Strict confidentiality, privacy and safeguarding is vital in the collection, analysis and utilization of data that covers identities that may be criminalized, or otherwise excluded, marginalized and facing systemic discrimination, including in the communities they may be serving.
- Data collection and management tools should be kept up to date to ensure timely and relevant data collection and analysis.
- Documentation of good practices, mistakes made, and lessons learnt is critical in DEI to support a developmental approach to DEI. This includes human stories and storytelling that engages personnel and leadership to complement quantitative and qualitative data on DEI.

7. Leadership and accountability

Just as all UN System personnel are called to be leaders, it is the intrinsic role of every UN System personnel to ensure inclusive and equitable principles are maintained in how they conduct their work and relate to each other in the workplace. However, the role of leadership in championing and driving the DEI agenda is vital. Leaders of the United Nations System are accountable for ensuring diversity in their workforce and inclusion in the workplace, as highlighted in the HLCM Leadership Commitments, which have been adopted to inform this principle as well.

Underpinning this principle are the following strategic approaches:

- All UN System personnel and those with people management responsibilities in particular should model inclusive leadership behaviors, proactively support DEI principles, and demonstrate allyship in all their interactions. These capabilities should be fostered through relevant training, coaching and mentoring opportunities, and be integrated as a key competency into all leadership assessments and people management roles.
- Leaders should invite engagement opportunities with individuals or groups that represent the broad diversity of the global workforce with an open mindset that welcomes the perspective of all, especially the more invisible segments of the workforce, and endeavor to "listen to understand, learn and enact" rather than "listen to respond".
- Senior leadership should provide mentorship, and coaching opportunities to underrepresented leaders, with a view towards introducing more diversity at senior leadership level and preparing the next generation of leaders at the UN for these influential roles.

- Senior leaders should be open to reverse mentorship by colleagues from excluded and marginalized groups, and from younger and more junior colleagues in order to learn from different lived experiences and perspectives, and to improve their inclusive leadership skills.
- Leaders should allocate adequate, stable and consistent funding for DEI personnel and interventions, with the acknowledgement that DEI is core business for all UN System organizations.
- All leaders and people managers should include in the execution of their duties the active support of excluded and marginalized personnel, with particular focus on historically vulnerable groups (e.g., persons with disabilities, minority groups, LGBTQIA+ people and women serving in crisis and hardship locations).
- Institutional arrangements that promote accountability, such as annual DEI reports, DEI committees, and other types of reporting and governing body modalities, should receive the whole-hearted support and championship of senior leadership. These arrangements are critical in ensuring that progress is continuously monitored and evaluated.
- It is critical that internal justice mechanisms and protection measures are in place in all organizations and supported by every leadership team. This includes continuous learning, skills and tools development in managing emerging cases such as from marginalized groups and previously non-recognized/highlighted cases of discrimination.