



## Summary of Decisions of the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Resources Network

Torino, Italy, 19-20 February 2014

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**ANNEXES**

**Annex 1 – List of Participants**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1. The Human Resources Network held its 28<sup>th</sup> session from 19-20 February 2014, hosted by the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) in Torino, Italy. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Catherine Pollard, ASG for Human Resources Management, United Nations, Ms. Ana-Luiza Thompson-Flores, Director, Human Resources Management, UNESCO, and Mr. Michael C. Liley, Director, Office of Human Resources, UNDP.
2. The Agenda was adopted as reflected in the table of contents.
3. The list of participating organizations and their representatives at the meeting is provided in Annex 1. All session documents are available on the HR Network website:

[www.unsceb.org/content/february-2014](http://www.unsceb.org/content/february-2014)

4. The Network meeting was opened with a welcome from Mr. Jafar Javan, Director of the UNSSC. Mr. Javan presented to the HR Network's Members the main activities of the UNSSC, focusing on the achievements in the field of training and advance education for UN Staff Members, and welcomed that CEB Members are choosing more often the Staff College as their meeting point. He underlined the UNSSC Program of Work for 2014 and reaffirmed the mandate of the Staff College as an Inter-Agency facility. Mr. Javan presented the new Executive Master in Management of International Organizations, jointly offered by SDA Bocconi School of Management<sup>1</sup>, ITC-ILO and UNSSC. The Executive Master is designed to be a one-year Programme to take place in Milan, Italy, and partially at the UNSSC. Mr. Javan also invited CEB Members to have a closer look at the Master Programme, designed to enhance managerial skills for international civil servants and foster a cohesive management culture UN system wide.

## 2. ISSUES FOR THE HR NETWORK'S CONSIDERATION

### (a) Briefings and updates

#### a. Report from the Field Group

5. The Field Group (FG) reported on the latest development of its activities and briefed the HR Network on the last meeting of the Group (Nov-2013). The November meeting focused on the review of Field Duty Stations (FDS) according to the conditions of life and work, inter alia, the review of 646 duty

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<sup>1</sup> SDA Bocconi School of Management, a leading Italian University on Public Management : <http://www.sdabocconi.it/en>

stations on the basis of the ICSC framework, the list of R&R cycles and destinations, extended relocation and additional payment of relocation, and measuring the unintended consequences of the new conditions of service in the field.

6. Some organizations underlined the importance of gathering good quality data related to security in the FDS and its impact on HR management in this duty stations. Obtaining information on indicators such as resignations, vacancy rates and rejection of employment offers, could also help to determine if current policies need amendment and to understand why Staff, or possible new applicants, will not be willing to move to this duty stations.
7. **Decision:** The HR Network thanked the FG for the update and presentation, it took note of the activities of the Group, and requested the FG to collect more information on the link between field duty stations with security challenges and staff members not accepting a post in those duty stations. Such data will be needed as input to further discussions at the next Human Resources Network meeting.

#### **b. Update from UN Cares**

8. UNFPA introduced the Report to the HR Network and welcomed the new participating organizations, IOM and UNSSC, as first time contributors. As an update of its many activities and achievements, the Report presented the current situation regarding the Budget for the Biennium 2014-2015. Other important issues included in the report are the 2013 activities of UN Cares and the 2014 priorities, which includes PEP management, reaching children and adolescents of UN families, and implementation of confidentiality training.
9. **Decision:** The HR Network took Note of the Report and reaffirmed the importance of UN Cares and assured the Programme of its continuous support.

#### **c. Update on New Talent Programme for Female Leaders**

10. UNFPA updated the HR Network with a presentation on a pilot programme Building Inter-Agency Field Leaders, designed as a tool to broaden the pool of female UN field leaders with required breadth of experience and networks, and which can reflect the diverse constituency served by participating agencies.
11. Currently the participating Agencies are UN Secretariat, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, however all organizations with significant field presence are welcomed to participate. The Programme has been designed to have 3

- years duration and involve around 24 participants. It is specifically tailored for high potential women at P-5 level with a focus for non OECD nationals, French and/or Arabic speakers.
12. The Programme is expected to improve professional opportunities for senior female staff within the UN system, broaden their network across UN organizations and cultivate a deeper understanding of the Programmes in other UN agencies.
  13. **Decision:** The HR Network welcomed the briefing and reaffirmed the importance of improving equal gender representation. It confirmed their strong support for such pilot programmes to nurture the development of women, especially in managerial and high level positions.

#### **d. Development of new HRN Work Plan**

14. The CEB-Secretariat announced that it is working on the new HR Network Work Plan, to be submitted during the next session of the Network, and informed that it will contact all HR Directors to systematically gather their views on their priorities in order to be included in this document. Some organizations mentioned similar issues that would like to propose for the Work Plan, inter alia, the development of staff and performance management, sharing synergies for lessons learned, data collection, financial challenges, improvement of efficiency and delivery.
15. In general, most of the participating members of the Network coincide with the CEB-Secretariat on the issues and agreed that they shall be developed in order to address the requests of Member States to deliver more with less.

#### **(b) HBP Project on Harmonization of Vacancy Announcements and Selection Process at country level for GS and NPO positions**

16. Ms. Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores, Director, Human Resources Management, UNESCO, presented to the Network the Final Report of the HBP Project. Ms. Thompson-Flores recalled the importance of the Project, as a milestone of harmonization of services, greater effectiveness and coherence in recruitment operations, increasing collaboration among UN agencies in the area of human resources management. Consequently, the Project is a successful contribution of the HR Network to further harmonization among field based agencies in respond to the request of the last QCPR review.
17. Participating organizations confirmed their interest in the Project and proposed to extend it to other duty stations. Few organizations decided to opt-out for the time being, with a possible clause to join-in at a later stage.

UNAIDS and WHO mentioned that they are currently conducting internal recruitment harmonization exercises, which will be subsequently aligned with the HBP Project. The Staff federations welcomed this initiative and highlighted the need for enhance communication in the next project faces.

18. **Decision:** The Network agreed to further roll out the Project in Uruguay and Vietnam with the participation of the following Agencies, UN Secretariat, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, FAO, IFAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, IOM and UNAIDS, to further look at the current efforts ongoing in Brazil regarding the Joint Operation Facility, and to identify additional 8 to 10 countries that could potentially become pilot countries to extend the HBP Project, by the next HR Network meeting.

### (c) Regionalization of relocating grant levels

19. The UN Secretariat introduced the topic to the HR Network, as recommended by the UN Office of Internal Oversight (UNOIOS). UNOIOS proposed to define the level of relocation grant according to specific regions, rather than maintaining one global level for all newly recruited staff. This approach in their view seems to better reflect the real cost than the current global lump sum.
20. Several participants highlighted the fact that this topic will be discussed during the ongoing ICSC compensation review. Therefore it would not be advisable at the moment to put forward isolated suggestions.
21. **Decision:** The HR Network agreed that the discussion of this topic shall be integrated in the overall discussions of the ICSC compensation review.

### (d) HLCM Priority topic “Mobility”

#### a. Inter-Agency Mobility

22. The CEB-Secretariat presented the topic on behalf of UNOPS, recognizing the organization’s effort and leadership demonstrated during the meetings of the Working Group on Inter-Agency Mobility and for sharing the results of the work undertaken in the past months. The CEB-Secretariat summarized the outcomes of the WG, focusing on the many recommendations submitted to the HR Network.
23. The recommendations covered topics related to contractual and financial impact, grades, right to return, internal versus external candidates, Professional Staff and G Staff, among others issues. Overall the WG recognized that interagency mobility is beneficial to all parties concerned. However, there are some constraints and challenges including differences

among organizations Staff's Rules, practices and provisions regarding inter-agency mobility, depending on the business model of the organization.

24. During the deliberations, the Network identified that additional detailed work will be required to further focus the recommendations on the most important practical issues like secondment policies, cost impact and saving, and recruitment rules. Some participants highlighted the option that not all recommendations have to be implemented among all members, due to the differences of the organizations in their scope and presence. It was further suggested to reduce the number of recommendations and concentrate on a limited number of relevant recommendations in a revised draft.
25. **Decision:** The HR Network requested the WG to review and refocus the present recommendations, and to submit a new version to the next HR Network meeting in summer 2014, with the aim to present a final document to the next HLCM meeting in October 2014.

**b. Dual Career & Staff Mobility Programme (DC & SM)**

26. The CEB-Secretariat updated the HR Network on the current status of the Programme, recalling the decision taken by the Network in its last meeting in summer 2013, to make a final decision on DC&SM. The Network was also updated on the development of the website which offers now Teamworks, Country Profiles and webinars, and it was asked to allow a distinctive period of time to be able to evaluate the impact of the website.
27. On the Programme, the CEB-Secretariat informed the Network that in its 10 years of existence it had notable achievements, inter alia, the development of more than 32 LESA networks, the launching of the new Website, two pilot projects (Rome and Kuala Lumpur) addressing the issue of spouse-partner work permits, and the expansion of the Programme to more than 15 participating organizations, overcoming some difficult challenges like budget, unclear regulations, and work permits for spouses-partners.
28. Further on, the CEB-Secretariat put forward two options for the consideration of the HR Network: a) To confirm the HR Network decision on its 24<sup>th</sup> meeting and close down the Programme, allowing a pilot period of 12 months to continue the maintenance of the newly developed website to systematically gather data of user interest and usage patterns. Once closed, the Network will be asked to decide on the further use of the current unspent funds in the Programme budget; b) To re-establish the Programme following a comprehensive Programme Evaluation of the efforts during the last five years and to provide guidance on the scope of such a new Programme, taking into account the recommendations of the WG on Inter-Agency Mobility.

29. The HR Network thanked the CEB-Secretariat for the comprehensive update of the current situation of the DC&SM Programme and welcomed the document on this issue. Some organizations highlighted the fact that the focus now has shifted to geographical mobility, and the interest to design a mobility scheme that shall be molded in a strategic and structure way. Following the same thought, several organizations suggested to use the remaining funds of the Programme to this end and support mobility on a geographic perspective, with the CEB-Secretariat leading the coordinated effort.
30. *Decision:* The Network decided to formally close the current DC & SM Programme, as for 30 March 2014, and it requested the CEB-Secretariat to prepare a proposal for a new Programme that will focus on support for geographic mobility. It agreed that all funds currently remaining from the contributions and allotments to the former DC&SM would be used by the CEB-Secretariat to support activities related to the development of the new Programme, through consultancy services, general temporary assistance and other miscellaneous operational expenses.

#### **(e) Medical Topics**

##### **a. Vaccination Policy**

31. The Chair of the UN Medical Directors Working Group (MDWG), Dr. Jillann Farmer, introduced the briefing paper to the Network and identified some of the major issues regarding the vaccination situation of UN Staff, which in some cases is precarious and concerning. The MDWG advised the Network to provide free vaccination to all UN Staff, disregarding their contractual situation, underlining that vaccination saves life and money. Dr. Farmer asked the Network to implement a wide campaign among staff to get vaccinated, with the specification that fees are waved.
32. The HR Network thanked the MDWG for the presentation and welcomed this effort. The member organizations showed commitment to the issue of vaccination, so well described by the MDWG, but remain conscious of the cost that implicates these actions, and how to implement a wide vaccination programme that could cover all staff with a minimum cost.
33. *Decision:* The Network welcomed the briefing paper and advised to collaborate with the UN health insurance providers of the organizations on a cost estimation of the MDWG proposal, thus allowing organizations and the Network, to have a clear view of the financial impact and subsequently take a decision on the issue.

##### **b. Mental Health and impact on the UN Work Force.**

34. Dr. Farmer presented the document on Mental Health to the Network and unveiled the raw facts about mental disorder, causing 900,000 cases of suicide every year. The raising security threats and tensions in the less developed countries, together with war and disasters, have a large impact on mental health and the psychosocial wellbeing of people living and working in those areas. Mental disorders are important risk factors for other diseases like cardiovascular diseases, HIV, and diabetes.
35. Dr. Farmer emphasized that UN Staff are increasingly working in disaster and war areas, becoming more prone to feel the impact of mental health disorders. Data is missing and there is no formalized system of limiting exposures, active follow up on demobilization or early recognition of distress and vulnerability. In fact, during 2013, a total of 18,000 days were lost to sick leave related to mental health diagnoses, this is the equivalent of 82 positions completely lost, without taking into account low productivity and workplace disruptions. Economically speaking, more than half of the disability pensions awarded by the Pension Fund have a mental health diagnosis.
36. The UN Medical Services Division has designed tools to address this concerning issue, like developing a UN integrated mental health strategy, a roll out of a mental health survey, evaluation tools to get a picture of the mental health situation among the work force, a pilot to test the feasibility of telehealth and more specifically telepsychiatry, mental health webinars, and enhanced HR Practices.
37. **Decision:** The Network welcomed the Document, appreciated the Chief Medical Director's effort for the very important and relevant presentation, and committed to work together to develop tools and mechanisms to address such an important issue.

**c. Conditions that qualify for Special Dependency Allowance**

38. Due to time constraints, it was decided to seek feedback from the organizations, in writing, after the HR Network meeting. Since no further feedback was received the document is considered endorsed by the HR Network.

**d. Performance Indicators for UN Medical Services**

39. The Chair of the MDWG, Dr. Farmer, presented the Briefing Paper *Key Health and Productivity Performance Measures for the UN System* and explained the existing link between low morale and sick leave rates, having a direct impact on managers and work force. Having this in mind, it was established a Sub-Working Group to develop a set of key performance measure related to health and productivity management in the UN, to identify and highlight

occupational health risk areas. The collaboration with HR will be critical to enable a clearer absence and sick leave management and assessment. To this end, Dr. Farmer invited the HR Directors to contribute to this effort and provide nominees who can participate in the sub-group.

40. **Decision:** The HR Network welcomed the update of the UN Chief Medical Services, congratulated their effort on this very important topic and agreed to nominate three representatives to the Performance Indicator sub-working group.

**e. Staff Health Care in Field duty stations**

41. UNDP presented the current situation of UN Clinics (formerly Dispensaries) to the HR Network, and briefed the Network on the activities undertaken by UNDP for the last six months on behalf of UNCS AFPs in conjunction with the UNMSD. UNDP explained that the alignment of the terminology from dispensary to clinic reflects the new recommended standard level of care equivalent to a DPKO Level One Clinic. To further develop an assessment tool, a consultant has been hired by UNDP to evaluate the existing medical facilities against the requirements of DPKO level one clinics, running a pilot in Kigali, Khartoum, Niamey and Dilly.
42. The aim at the standardization of all the UN Clinics dispensaries is to ensure they have the capacity to address staff needs for access to quality basic health care and basic laboratory facilities, and to ensure that the resources invested are justified. According to this, it is recommended to upgrade the facility in Niamey, maintain the clinics in Kigali and Khartoum, and general need for training and information dissemination for clinics' staff.
43. A transition period was designed by UNDP to carry out evaluation of existing dispensaries against the new assessment tool and phase into the new guidelines. The guidelines will be promulgated, jointly with UNMSD, in mid-2014, to finally confirm the tool by UNMSD in cooperation with the Medical Directors Working Group.
44. **Decision:** The HR Network congratulated UNDP and the Medical Services for the collaboration and work effort on this very important initiative. Furthermore, the Network requested UNDP to continue working with the Medical Services to prepare a detailed follow up Report for one of the next HR Network meetings.

### **3. ISSUES UNDER DISCUSSION BY THE ICSC**

#### **a. Key findings of the ICSC global staff survey**

45. The ICSC Secretariat presented to the Network the key findings of the ICSC Global Staff Survey and the findings from the consultations with Executive Heads and Human Resources Directors. The survey was answered by 14,000 UN Staff, mainly from family duty stations.
46. Several Organizations expressed keen interest in receiving results tailored to their specific situation including breakdowns by organization, duty stations and grade level. The ICSC Secretariat agreed to provide this data to the organizations. Others expressed their concern about the Survey, which could have been designed in a way to gather specific insight into more directly compensation-related matters, and called for certain prudence in the interpretation of its results for compensation purposes, since a number of detailed questions remain unanswered.
47. The HR Network took note of the Report and agreed to use the information of the Survey's findings for each organization's purpose.

#### **b. Progress Report of the working group on the remuneration structure, including post adjustment**

48. The ICSC Secretariat presented the Report to the Network, related to the ongoing work and efforts of the Working Group 1, especially regarding the results of the first meeting of the WG in December 2013. The WG will be looking to specific topics like base pay and post adjustment, salary scale design, base pay for New York/HQ, a review of dependent versus single rate of pay, less scale compression at higher grades, and review of the post adjustment methodology.
49. The ICSC Secretariat underlined the wide range of topics that are touched by this WG, and recognized the fact to stay focused on the mandate of the WG, allowing enough room for organizations to have a productive and positive discussion on this topic that will impact all UN Staff. Furthermore, the ICSC Secretariat informed the HR Network that the next meeting of the WG will take place in May, in New York, after the 78<sup>th</sup> session of ICSC.
50. The Network thanked the ICSC Secretariat for the information provided, voiced its concern on the difficulty of the topic of this WG, and agreed to stay in the context of the compensation review mandate. They also mentioned to the ICSC Secretariat the need to have a clear picture of the next steps and a time framework, in order to be aligned with the set timelines, a Road Map document is be very welcomed.

**c. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the 68<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) relating to the work of the commission**

51. The ICSC Secretariat introduced to the HR Network the Report related to the resolutions and decisions adopted by the 68<sup>th</sup> UNGA, especially those topics on which the ICSC Secretariat is expected to report this year to UNGA. The ICSC Secretariat informed the HR Network that the Commission is well aware of the continuously financial situation in some of the Member States, which shape the expectations of the possible outcome of the review.
52. The ICSC Secretariat informed the Network that UNGA requested the Commission to report this year on three additional items, a) The review of the appointment of health insurance premiums, b) The margin, and, c) Mandatory age of separation. The ICSC Secretariat also informed the Network that it will conduct consultations with all relevant stake holders to achieve the task given by UNGA.
53. Several organizations expressed their concern on how the ICSC Secretariat is going to conduct the work ahead and reiterated their concern on an increased mandatory age of separation for existing staff. During the discussion organizations agreed that more information is required to have a more focus deliberations on health insurance matters.
54. The HR Network took note of the Report presented by the ICSC Secretariat, recommended to the ICSC Secretariat to share with the organizations the way forward, and remained committed to work together on these important issues that will affect all UN Staff.

**d. Report on gender balance in the UN common system**

55. The ICSC Secretariat presented to the Network a brief introduction of the Report on the status of women, and underlined that although great progress has been achieved there is still more to do to attain gender balance across the UN system, as requested by UNGA.
56. The ICSC Secretariat welcomed the fact that gender balance is well on its way, especially in the categories between P1 and P3, but further efforts are need to be undertaken at higher level. The ICSC Secretariat also informed the Network that it will request UN Women to be the organization in charge of preparing the report in the future, and has started talks on this matter with that organization.
57. The majority of the organizations supported the ICSC and reinforced their commitment to achieve gender balance among their staff. UNWOMEN informed the Network about the efforts to develop tools to grow female

leaders into the higher levels of international professionals. Some organizations highlighted the interdependencies of the gender discussion with the compensation review mentioning that areas such as maternity leave are not in line with best practices of other employers.

58. The HR Network thanked the ICSC Secretariat for the Report and the briefing on gender balance, and reaffirmed its commitment on this matter, recognizing that policies designed to achieve this goal have to be fully implemented to narrow the gap of gender balance.

**e. Survey of best prevailing conditions of employment in Madrid**

59. The ICSC Secretariat presented the results of the survey to the Network, stating that wide participation of staff was achieved. Following the results of the survey actions will be taken to recalculate post adjustment and dependency allowance in that duty station. The ICSC Secretariat confirmed that results are not published yet but it will be sharing the outcome of the survey with the HR Network as soon as all gathered data has been evaluated.
60. The HR Network welcomed the ICSC Secretariat for the briefing on the results of the survey and thanked them for the update and information resulting from the survey, although they were concerned on the small percentage of survey participants, taking in consideration that Madrid duty station is a very small office.

**f. General Service salary survey methodologies: salary adjustment at duty stations with fewer than 30 staff**

61. The report was presented by the UN Secretariat, which briefed the HR Network on the current situation of how to adjust salaries to duty stations with less than 30 and more than 10 staff members. The UN Secretariat informed the Network that it was requested by the ICSC Secretariat, as the organization with most of those duty stations, to bring forward alternatives on how to adjust salary scales, since it was not cost effective to undertake surveys in those small duty stations. The UN Secretariat also underlined the issue of cost of living adjustment, including allowances of staff members on non-survey duty stations.

**g. Report of the Working Group on the Framework for HRM**

62. The Report was presented by the ICSC Secretariat to update the HR Network on the current situation of the revised framework, and the results of the second meeting of the Working Group, which took place in November 2013, underlining that the revised framework attempts to be more strategic and results focused. The ICSC Secretariat also mentioned that the current

framework will be replaced by the new framework, once it is endorsed by the ICSC.

63. The ICSC Secretariat explained the principle topics touched upon at the November meeting and declared that the revised framework is intended as a reference document to all stakeholders, especially to the HR Departments, Staff Members, Management, the ICS Commission itself and ultimately for Member States.
64. The Network took note of the report and thanked the ICSC Secretariat for the update. Some organizations reiterated the request for further clarification on the purpose and nature of the Framework. It was clarified that work on the framework falls under Article 16 of the ICSC Statute.

#### **h. Proposed Agenda for next meeting of ACPAQ**

65. The ICSC Secretariat informed the Network that ACPAQ will be meeting in April in Budapest, Hungary. Some of the topics on ACPAQ's Agenda include cost of living surveys, a review of the post adjustment index structure, harmonization of the specification of the weight of the out-of-area component for all duty stations, review of the classification of duty stations, a review of the rental subsidiary scheme, among other important topics.

#### **4. HLCM Priority Topic "Performance Management"**

66. The UN Secretariat presented to the HR Network the Report of the Working Group on Performance Management, and updated the Network on this topic, recognizing that several UN entities are committed to establish or review the performance management systems and tools. As UN Member States are requesting to introduce better practices the UN Secretariat stated the timely opportunity to undertake the reviews.
67. Further on, the UN Secretariat informed the HR Network on the advance work of the Working Group and the essential of a performance management system in the UN, including the nine essential characteristics, which are included in the report, and call all organizations to strive the implementations of these initiatives in accordance with the nine principles and to continue to work together to share experiences and best practices.
68. **Decision:** The Network reaffirmed its commitment to further improve performance management practices in the UN organizations. It decided to discuss the topic in greater detail at one of the next HR meetings with a

particular focus on the current discussion in the ICSC compensation review on Performance Base Pay.

## **5. AOB and Closure**

69. The Network, on the voice of one of its Co-Chairs, thanked Ms. Paulina Analena, President, CCIUSA, for the great work during her Presidency of the Working Group, and wished her, on behalf of the Network, the best on her future endeavors.
70. The HR Network announced to its Members that it will meet again for its Summer Session in July 16 to 18, of the current year, in Rome, Italy, to be hosted by FAO, and declared the 28<sup>th</sup> meeting closed.

## Annex I

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Org.	Name	Title
UNNY	Ms. Catherine POLLARD	Assistant Secretary-General of HR Management
UNNY	Ms. Ruth DE MIRANDA	Chief, HR Policy Service
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ITU	Mr. Eric DALHEN	Head, Human Resources Policies Division
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IFAD	Mr. Peter FROBEL	HR Management Advisor
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WIPO	Ms. Therese DAYER	Deputy Director, HR Management Department
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UNDP	Ms. Henrietta DE BEER	Chief, Policy and Compensation Unit, OHR
UNDP	Ms. Esereda MUSISI	Policy Specialist, Policy Compensation Units
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UNHCR	Mr. Arnab ROY	Head, HR Policy and Planning Service
UNICEF	Mr. Richard BRIDLE	Director, Division of Human Resources
UNICEF	Mr. Stephan Grieb	Chief, Policy and Administrative Law Section, HR Division
UNFPA	Mr. Michael EMERY	Director, Division of Human Resources
UNFPA	Ms. Sarah ROSE	HR Policy and Planning Specialist
UNOPS	Mr. Pierre MOREAU-PERON	Director, Human Resources
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WFP	Mr. Makhtar Ndiaye	Deputy Director for HR Management
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UNAIDS	Mr. Jonathan BALL	Chief, Organizational Development, HRM
UNRWA	Ms. Laura LONDEN	Director, Human Resources

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